THE

WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS;

WITH

HIS LIFE,

BY

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

"HIGH CHIEF of Scottish song!
That could'st alternately impart
Wisdom and rapture in thy page,
And brand each vice with satire strong;
Whose lines are mottoes of the heart,
Whose truths electrify the sage."

CAMPBELL.

IN SIX VOLUMES

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NOTICE.

The third volume, the Editor hopes, will be found full of new interest to all who admire the genius of Burns. The friends of the Poet and of this publication have alike exerted themselves; and the result is, that many valuable pieces of poetry, from four lines in length up to a hundred, are now, for the first time, united to his works. Some of these hitherto unpublished pieces will be found to equal, others to approach, the Poet's best productions. Various readings, illustrative criticism, and characteristic notes, are added.

CONTENTS.

[Those Pieces thus marked *, appear for the first time in an edition of Burns' Works.]

EPITAPHS, EPIGRAMS, &c., &c.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

POEMS.

ADDRESS

TO

EDINBURGH.

I.

EDINA! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

II.

Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labour plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise;
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

III.

Thy sons, Edina! social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarg'd, their lib'ral mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to sorrow's wail,
Or modest merit's silent claim;
And never may their sources fail!
And never envy blot their name!

IV.

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy!
Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine!

V.

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar;
Like some bold vet'ran, gray in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar:
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock;
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

VI.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Fam'd heroes! had their royal home:
Alas, how chang'd the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam,
Tho' rigid law cries out, 'twas just!

VII.

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply, my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led!

VIII.

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

"I enclose you two poems," says Burns to Chalmers, "I have carded and spun since I past Glenbuck. One blank in the Address to Edinburgh, 'Fair B—,' is the heavenly Miss Burnet, daughter to Lord Monboddo, at whose house I have had the honour to be more than once. There has not been any thing nearly like her in all the combinations of beauty, grace, and goodness, the great Creator has formed since Milton's Eve on the first day of her existence." His admiration both of the young lady's loveliness and the grandeur of Edinburgh in verse is as elegant as it is vigorous.

I have heard the second verse quoted as a noble one by an eminent English poet, and the fifth verse repeated with a glowing brow by Sir Walter Scott, who added, "The description is vivid and happy." His own striking lines on the same splendid scene in Marmion came to my mind as he spoke:—

"When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red:
For on the smoke-wreaths huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,

And tinged them with a lustre proud
Like that which streaks a thunder cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high—
Mine own romantic town!
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw,
Here Preston bay and Berwick law,
And broad between them rolled
The gallant Firth the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float
Like emeralds chased in gold."

Burns loved to wander on the hills of Braid, and it was frequently his pleasure to climb Arthur's Seat, and throwing himself down on the green sward on its summit, give way to such rapturous expressions as those which Scott gives to Fitz-Eustace :—

"Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridle-hand;
And making demi-volte in air,
Cried, 'Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land!'"

Other points of the landscape attracted the Poet's notice.—"He was passionately fond," says Dugald Stewart, "of the beauties of nature; and I recollect once he told me, when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to his mind which none could understand who had not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and the worth which they contained."

LINES

ON

MEETING WITH LORD DAER.

THIS wot ye all whom it concerns,
I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
October twenty-third,
A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day,
Sae far I sprachled up the brae,
I dinner'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at druken writers' feasts,
Nay, been bitch-fou 'mang godly priests,
Wi' rev'rence be it spoken ;
I've even join'd the honour'd jorum,
When mighty Squireships of the quorum,
Their hydra drouth did sloken.

But wi' a Lord—stand out my shin,
A Lord—a Peer—an Earl's son,
Up higher yet my bonnet!
And sic a Lord!—lang Scotch ells twa,
Our Peerage he o'erlooks them a',
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But, oh ! for Hogarth's magic pow'r !
To show Sir Bardie's willyart glow'r,
And how he star'd and stammer'd,
When goavan, as if led wi' branks,
An' stumpan on his ploughman shanks,
He in the parlour hammer'd.

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,
An' at his lordship steal't a look,
Like some portentous omen ;
Except good sense and social glee,
An' (what surpris'd me) modesty,
I marked nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the great,
The gentle pride, the lordly state,
The arrogant assuming ;
The feint a pride, nae pride had he,
Nor sauce, nor state, that I could see,
Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his Lordship I shall learn,
Henceforth to meet with unconcern
One rank as weel's another ;
Nae honest worthy man need care
To meet with noble youthful Daer,
For he but meets a brother.

Basil, Lord Daer, uncle to the present Earl of Selkirk, died too soon for his country. He had enterprise, talents, and taste, and those winning manners which make their way to all hearts. His name was always pronounced by Dugald Stewart with affection. Late in life he speaks in his letters of his "young friend Basil" with much warmth. —"The first time I saw Robert Burns," said the Professor, "was on the 23rd of October, 1786, when he dined at my house in Ayrshire, together with our common friend, John Mackenzie, surgeon, in Mauchline, to whom I am indebted for the pleasure of his acquaintance. My excellent and much lamented friend, the late Basil Lord Daer, happened to arrive at Catrine the same day, and, by the kindness and frankness of his manners, left an impression on the mind of the Poet, which never was effaced. The verses which the Poet wrote on the occasion are among the most imperfect of his pieces; but a few stanzas may, perhaps, be an object of curiosity, both on account of the character to which they relate, and of the light which they throw on the situation and feelings of the writer before his name was known to the public."

In a letter to Dr. Mackenzie, the Poet says of the verses, on meeting with Lord Daer, "They were really extempore, but a little corrected since. They may entertain you a little with the help of that partiality with which you are so good as to favour my performances." Burns has described, in language which almost defies translation, the emotions which he felt on finding himself for the first time in the presence of a living lord. His account of his jovial experiences among the writers, the priests, and the squireships of the west, is very humorous, and, perhaps, very true; and his "watching the symptoms of the great," is one of his sharp touches.

EPISTLE

TO MAJOR LOGAN.

Hail, thairm-inspirin', rattlin' Willie!
Though fortune's road be rough an' hilly
To every fiddling, rhyming billie,
We never heed,
But take it like the unbacked filly,
Proud o' her speed.

When idly goavan whyles we saunter
Yirr, fancy barks, awa' we canter
Uphill, down brae, till some mishanter,
Some black bog-hole,
Arrests us, then the scathe an' banter
We're forced to thole.

Hale be your heart! Hale be your fiddle!
Lang may your elbuck jink and diddle,
To cheer you through the weary widdle
O' this wild warl',
Until you on a crummock driddle
A gray hair'd carl.

Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon
Heaven send your heart-strings ay in tune,
And screw your temper pins aboon
A fifth or mair,
The melancholious, lazie croon
O' cankrie care.

May still your life from day to day
Nae "lente largo" in the play,
But "allegretto forte" gay
Harmonious flow
A sweeping, kindling, bauld strathspey—
Encore! Bravo!

A blessing on the cheery gang
Wha dearly like a jig or sang,
An' never think o' right an' wrang
By square an' rule,
But as the clegs o' feeling stang
Are wise or fool.

My hand-waled curse keep hard in chase
The harpy, hoodock, purse-proud race,
Wha count on poortith as disgrace—
Their tuneless hearts!
May fireside discords jar a base
To a' their parts!

But come, your hand, my careless brither,
I'th' ither warl' if there's anither,
An' that there is I've little swither
About the matter;
We cheek for chow shall jog thegither,
I'se ne'er bid better.

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,
Eve's bonny squad priests wyte them sheerly
For our grand fa';
But still, but still, I like them dearly—
God bless them a'!

Ochon for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' foul o' earthly jinkers,
The witching curs'd delicious blinkers
Hae put me hyte,
And gart me weet my waukrife winkers,
Wi' girnan spite.

But by yon moon!—and that's high swearin'—
An' every star within my hearin'!
An' by her een wha was a dear ane!
I'll ne'er forget;
I hope to gie the jads a clearin'
In fair play yet.

My loss I mourn, but not repent it,
I'll seek my pursie whare I tint it,
Ance to the Indies I were wonted,
Some cantraip hour,
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted,
Then, *vive l'amour!*

Faites mes baissemains respectueuse,
To sentimental sister Susie,
An' honest Lucky; no to roose you,
Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple fate allows ye
To grace your blood.

Nae mair at present can I measure,
An' trowth my rhymin' ware's nae treasure;
But when in Ayr, some half-hour's leisure,
Be't light, be't dark,
Sir Bard will do himself the pleasure
To call at Park.

ROBERT BURNS.

Mossgiel, 30th October, 1786.

Several of the stanzas of this epistle, which is now published for the first time, resemble passages in other productions of the poet; yet it has a spirit all its own. Major Logan lived at Parkhouse, near Ayr, with his mother and sister, and was not only a first-rate performer

on the violin but a pleasant man, and not a little of a wit. The Bard refers happily to his musical skill:—

"Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon,
Heaven send your heart-strings ay in tune,
An' screw your temper-pins aboon
A fifth or mair,
The melancholious lazie croon
O' cankrie care."

The unfortunate termination of his courtship with Jean Armour was often present to his mind: he alludes to it in the verse beginning with

"But by yon moon!—and that's high swearin,'

and contemplated his voyage to the West in the succeeding stanza. Some of the lines as well as the sentiments will remind the reader of the verses "On a Scotch Bard gone to the West Indies."

To David Auld of Ayr, I am indebted for a copy of this poem from the original in his possession. To him, as well as to the talents of my friend Thom, the admirers of Burns owe much. From the chisel of the latter came those clever personations of Tam O'Shanter and Souter Johnny, which attracted so much notice wherever they were exhibited—and to the love of the former for his native district, the little world of Ayrshire owes the continuance of those rustic statues on the banks of the Doon. They have found a not unsuitable sanctuary, and that, too, in the midst of the scene made immortal by the Bard.

THE BRIGS OF AYR,

A POEM,

INSCRIBED TO J. BALLANTYNE, ESQ., AYR.

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from ev'ry bough;
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-ton'd plovers, gray, wild-whistling o'er the hill;
Shall he, nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern misfortune's field—
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,

He glows with all the spirit of the Bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward!
Still, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
Skill'd in the secret to bestow with grace;
When Ballantyne befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter-hap,
And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap;
Potatoe-bings are snugged up frae skaith
Of coming Winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd buds an' flow'rs' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o'devils smoor'd wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on ev'ry side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flow'r in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except, perhaps, the robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree:

The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide-spreads the noon-tide blaze,
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.
'Twas in that season, when a simple bard,
Unknown and poor, simplicity's reward,
Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspired, or haply prest wi' care,
He left his bed, and took his wayward rout,
And down by Simpson's* wheel'd the left about:
(Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wander'd out he knew not where nor why)
The drowsy Dungeon-clock,† had number'd two,
And Wallace Tow'r† had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln Firth, with sullen sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore.
All else was hush'd as Nature's closed e'e:
The silent moon shone high o'er tow'r and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream.—

When, lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the gos‡ drives on the wheeling hare;

* A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.
† The two steeples. ‡ The gos-hawk, or falcon.

Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymer instantly descry'd
The Sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside
(That Bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the sp'ritual folk;
Fays, Spunkies, Kelpies, a', they can explain them.
And ev'n the vera deils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The very wrinkles gothic in his face:
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstl'd lang,
Yet, teughly doure, he bade an unco bang.
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat,
That he at Lon'on, frae ane Adams, got;
In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead.
Wi' virls and whirlygigums at the head.
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch;—
It chanc'd his new-come neebor took his e'e,
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless sneer to see his modish mien,
He, down the water, gies him this guide'en:—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na', frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheep-
shank,
Ance ye were streekit o'er frae bank to bank!

But gin ye be a brig as auld as me,
Tho' faith, that day I doubt ye'll never see;
There'll be, if that date come, I'll wad a boddle,
Some fewer whigmeleeries in your noddle.

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense,
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet—
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane an' lime,
Compare wi' bonnie Brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste wou'd tak the Ducat-stream,*
Tho' they should cast the vera sark and swim,
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly, Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride!—
This mony a year I've stood the flood an' tide;
And tho' wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
I'll be a Brig, when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform ye better.
When heavy, dark, continued a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;

* A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.

When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal* draws his feeble source,
Arous'd by blust'ring winds an' spotting thowes,
In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,
Sweeps dams an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck,† down to the Ratton-key,‡
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd tumbling sea—
Then down ye'll hurl, deil nor ye never rise!
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies.
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.

Fine Architecture, trowth, I needs must say't o't!
The L—d be thankit that we've tint the gate o't!
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threat'ning jut like precipices;
O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves:
Windows, and doors in nameless sculpture drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;

* The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the West of Scotland, where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of Ghaists, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.

† The source of the river Ayr.

‡ A small landing-place above the large key.

Forms like some bedlam Statuary's dream,
The craz'd creations of misguided whim ;
Forms might be worshipp'd on the bended knee,
And still the second dread command be free,
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea.
Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason reptile, bird or beast ;
Fit only for a doited monkish race,
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace ;
Or cuifs of latter times wha held the notion
That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion ;
Fancies that our guid Brugh denies protection !
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection !

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd ancient yealings,
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings !
Ye worthy Proveses, an' mony a Bailie,
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil ay ;
Ye dainty Deacons and ye douce Conveeners,
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners ;
Ye godly Councils wha hae blest this town ;
Ye godly brethren o' the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters ;
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers ;
A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do !

How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;
And agonizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degen'rate race!
Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid scots hold forth a plain braid story!
Nae langer thrifty citizens an' douce,
Meet owre a pint, or in the council-house;
But staumrel, corky-headed, graceless gentry,
The herryment and ruin of the country;
Men, three parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your weel-hain'd gear on d—d new Brigs
and Harbours!

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak to through,
As for your Priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and Clergy are a shot right kittle:
But, under favour o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' Magistrates might weel be spar'd:
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can have a handle
To mouth 'a citizen,' a term o' scandal;
Nae mair the Council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;
Men wha grew wise priggin' owre hops an' raisins,

Or gather'd lib'ral views in bonds and seisins,
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shor'd them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to Common-sense for once betray'd them,
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clishmaclaver might been said,
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell; but all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright:
Adown the glitt'ring stream they featly danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd:
They footed o'er the wat'ry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling bards heroic ditties sung.—
O had M'Lauchlan,* thairm-inspiring Sage
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thro' his dear strathspeys they bore with highland rage;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptur'd joys or bleeding cares;
How would his highland lug been nobler fir'd,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspir'd!
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard;

* A well known performer of Scottish music on the violin.

Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the stream in front appears,
A venerable Chief advanc'd in years;
His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet Female Beauty hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came Rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye:
All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn, wreath'd with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next follow'd Courage, with his martial stride,
From where the Feal wild woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair:
Learning and Worth in equal measures trode
From simple Catrine, their long-lov'd abode:
Last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death;
At sight of whom our Sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

———

Burns wrote this poem in Edinburgh for the second edition of his works, and it is likely he desired to compliment his Ayrshire friends under pretence of drawing a picture of times ancient and modern. That he has done both is quite clear. The courage of the Montgomerys is recorded in a couplet: and learning and worth in equal measures move in Catrine, the residence of Dugald Stewart; nor is Mrs. Stewart of Stair, afterwards of Afton, forgotten:—

> "Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
> A female form, came from the towers of Stair."

In after-days the beautiful solitude of Catrine was invaded by a cotton-mill, and the Professor carried away his household gods; the lady of Stair also moved: she built a mansion on the banks of Afton-water, and there at present two of her daughters reside. Feal is a small stream in the vicinity of Coilsfield, in those days the seat of Colonel Montgomery, afterwards Earl of Eglinton.

The idea of the poem was taken from Fergusson's "Plane Stanes and Causeway." The Edinburgh bard makes a "cadie" or public messenger overhear the conversation and report it: no attempt is made to personify the speakers.—"In the dialogue between the Brigs of Ayr," says Currie, "Burns himself is the auditor; the Poet, pressed by care or inspired by whim, wandered out in the darkness of a winter night to the mouth of the Ayr, where the stillness was interrupted only by the rushing sound of the influx of the tide. The dungeon clock had struck two; the sound had been repeated by Wallace-tower; the moon shone bright, and the infant ice was forming on the stream. The bard heard the 'clanging sugh' of wings, and speedily perceived

> 'The sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside.'

These genii enter into a conversation, and compare an-

cient times with the present. They differ, as may be expected, and taunt and scold each other in broad Scotch. This conversation, which is certainly humorous, may be considered as the proper business of the poem."

Ayr was one of the military stations of Edward I., and the place where the hero Wallace first displayed his courage and strength. It became a royal burgh as early as 1202, and the "Auld Brig" might well have the "very wrinkles gothic in its face," for it was erected in the reign of Alexander III. The "New Brig" stands a hundred yards or so below the old one, and was chiefly raised by the patriotic exertions of that Ballantyne to whom the poem is inscribed. Ayr gave birth to the accomplished Count Hamilton, author of the "Memoirs of Grammont." It was the residence too, of the heroic Wallaces of Craigie, and, moreover, Cromwell saw it with the eye of Edward I., for he constructed a fort between the town and the sea to keep the West in awe.

Soon after the appearance of "The Brigs of Ayr," other brigs in the north began to speak. A Nithsdale rhymer wrote a volume of verses, and one of the pieces was entitled "A Conversation between the Auld Brig and New Brig of Dumfries." He observed them to be big with coming words, and being a person of patience, as well as discernment, lingered within ear-shot to hear what passed. The brigs were in no hurry to begin, if I may trust the only lines which remain on my memory:—

"Ance upon a day
Dumfries' twa brigs stood still and nought did say."

WRITTEN

On the Blank Leaf of a Copy of the Poems, presented to an Old Sweetheart, then married.

Once fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear;
Sweet early object of my youthful vows!
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple artless rhymes,
One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more,—
Who distant burns in flaming torrid climes,
Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic roar.

The name of the lady to whom this double present of praise and poetry was given has not been mentioned. Burns, it is evident, had at that time no better prospect before him than emigration to the West Indies: his prose and verse of the year 1786 are filled with allusions to that reluctant step: he seems to have looked for nothing better than to die soon amid torrid climes, if he escaped drowning in the passage. He, perhaps, did not dread the voyage so much as he felt hurt and humbled to be obliged to go abroad from want of encouragement at home.

ON

THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, Esq.,

OF ARNISTON,

LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

Lone on the bleaky hills the straying flocks
Shun the fierce storms among the sheltering rocks;
Down from the rivulets, red with dashing rains,
The gathering floods burst o'er the distant plains;
Beneath the blasts the leafless forests groan;
The hollow caves return a sullen moan.

Ye hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
Ye howling winds, and wintry swelling waves!
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad to your sympathetic scenes I fly;
Where to the whistling blast and waters' roar
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.

O heavy loss, thy country ill could bear!
A loss these evil days can ne'er repair!
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance ey'd, and sway'd her rod;
Hearing the tidings of the fatal blow
She sunk, abandon'd to the wildest woe.

Wrongs, injuries, from many a darksome den,
Now gay in hope explore the paths of men:
See from his cavern grim Oppression rise,
And throw on poverty his cruel eyes;
Keen on the helpless victim see him fly,
And stifle, dark, the feebly-bursting cry:

Mark ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing elate in these degenerate times;
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way:
While subtile Litigation's pliant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong:
Hark, injur'd Want recounts th' unlisten'd tale,
And much-wrong'd Mis'ry pours th' unpitied wail!

Ye dark waste hills, and brown unsightly plains,
To you I sing my grief-inspired strains:
Ye tempests, rage! ye turbid torrents, roll!
Ye suit the joyless tenor of my soul.
Life's social haunts and pleasures I resign,
Be nameless wilds and lonely wanderings mine,
To mourn the woes my country must endure,
That wound degenerate ages cannot cure.

These lines were composed, it appears, in compliance with the request of Advocate Hay.—"The enclosed poem," Burns thus writes to that gentleman, "was

written in consequence of your suggestion last time I had the pleasure of seeing you. It cost me an hour or two of next morning's sleep, but did not please me, so it laid by, an ill-digested effort, till the other day I gave it a critic-brush. These kinds of subjects are much hackneyed, and, besides, the wailings of the rhyming tribe over the ashes of the great are cursedly suspicious, and out of all character for sincerity. These ideas damped my muse's fire: however I have done the best I could."

How the poem was welcomed, and what the Poet felt, he has written with his own hand under the copy of the poem which he gave to Dr. Geddes. "The foregoing poem," he says, "has some tolerable lines in it, but the incurable wound of my pride will not suffer me to correct, or even peruse it. I sent a copy of it, with my best prose letter, to the son of the great man, the theme of the piece, by the hands of one of the noblest men in God's world, Alexander Wood, surgeon. When, behold! his solicitorship took no more notice of my poem or me than I had been a strolling fiddler, who had made free with his lady's name over a silly new reel! Did the gentleman imagine that I looked for any dirty gratuity?"

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER

THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.,

BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY, A PARTICULAR FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR'S.

SAD thy tale, thou idle page,
And rueful thy alarms:
Death tears the brother of her love
From Isabella's arms.

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smil'd;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
Succeeding hopes beguil'd.

Fate oft tears the bosom cords
That nature finest strung:
So Isabella's heart was form'd,
And so that heart was wrung.

Were it in the poet's power,
Strong as he shares the grief
That pierces Isabella's heart,
To give that heart relief.

Dread Omnipotence, alone,
Can heal the wound he gave;
Can point the brimful grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
And fear no withering blast;
There Isabella's spotless worth
Shall happy be at last.

The fifth verse has been restored from the Poet's manuscripts, and I am also enabled to add, from the same source, that the family of the M'Leod's having suffered much from misfortune, Burns was deeply impressed with the bereavements they had in a short space of time endured. That he sympathized much in such distresses, his works sufficiently show; some of his noblest poems—such as the Elegy on Mathew Henderson, were composed on occasions of domestic mourning.

TO MISS LOGAN,

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS AS A NEW YEAR'S GIFT,

JAN. 1, 1787.

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driv'n,
And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
Are so much nearer Heav'n.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
The infant year to hail;
I send you more than India boasts
In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile and faithless love
Is charg'd, perhaps, too true;
But may, dear maid, each lover prove
An Edwin still to you!

The lady to whom Burns presented the Minstrel of Beattie, inscribed with these elegant lines, was the "Sentimental Sister Susie" of the Epistle to Major Logan. She lived at Park-house, and sometimes at Camlarg; sung, I have heard, with taste and feeling, and, with her brother, helped to cheer the Bard in many of his desponding hours.

THE AMERICAN WAR.

A FRAGMENT.

I.

When Guildford good our pilot stood,
And did our helm thraw, man,
Ae night, at tea, began a plea,
Within America, man:
Then up they gat the maskin-pat,
And in the sea did jaw, man;
An' did nae less, in full Congress,
Than quite refuse our law, man.

II.

Then thro' the lakes Montgomery takes,
I wat he was na slaw, man;
Down Lowrie's burn he took a turn,
And Carleton did ca', man;
But yet, what-reck, he, at Quebec,
Montgomery-like did fa', man,
Wi' sword in hand, before his band,
Amang his en'mies a', man.

III.

Poor Tammy Gage, within a cage,
Was kept at Boston ha', man;
Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe
For Philadelphia, man;

Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
Guid Christian blood to draw, man :
But at New York, wi' knife an' fork,
Sir-loin he hacked sma', man.

IV.

Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,
Till Fraser brave did fa', man ;
Then lost his way, ae misty day,
In Saratoga shaw, man.
Cornwallis fought as lang's he dought,
An' did the buckskins claw, man ;
But Clinton's glaive frae rust to save,
He hung it to the wa', man.

V.

Then Montague, an' Guilford, too,
Began to fear a fa', man ;
And Sackville dour, wha stood the stoure,
The German Chief to thraw, man :
For Paddy Burke, like ony Turk,
Nae mercy had at a', man ;
An' Charlie Fox threw by the box,
An' lows'd his tinkler jaw, man.

VI.

Then Rockingham took up the game,
Till death did on him ca', man ;
When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
Conform to gospel law, man ;

Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
  They did his measures thraw, man,
For North an' Fox united stocks,
  An' bore him to the wa', man.

VII.

Then clubs an' hearts were Charlie's cartes,
  He swept the stakes awa', man,
Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
  Led him a sair *faux pas*, man ;*
The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,
  On Chatham's boy did ca', man ;
An' Scotland drew her pipe, an' blew,
  'Up, Willie, waur them a', man !'

VIII.

Behind the throne then Grenville's gone,
  A secret word or twa, man ;
While slee Dundas arous'd the class,
  Be-north the Roman wa', man :
An' Chatham's wraith, in heavenly graith,
  (Inspired Bardies saw, man)
Wi' kindling eyes cry'd 'Willie, rise !
  'Would I hae fear'd them a', man ?'

IX.

But, word an' blow, North, Fox, and Co.,
  Gowff'd Willie like a ba', man,
Till Suthron raise, and coost their claise
  Behind him in a raw, man ;

An' Caledon threw by the drone,
An' did her whittle draw, man;
An' swoor fu' rude, thro' dirt an' blood
To make it guid in law, man.
* * * * *

"The page of Burns," Campbell observes, "contains a lively image of contemporary life, and the country from which he sprung." Dr. Blair said something not unlike this when he remarked of this poem "Burns's politics smell of the smithy." To understand the allusion of the critic, the reader would require to be acquainted, as no doubt many are, with the scene which a country smithy presents,

"When ploughmen gather wi' their graith,"

and ale, politics, and parish scandal are all alike carefully discussed. The forge is small, and all within it is black, save the fire, which, awakened by a pair of large bellows, blazes bright, while the blacksmith anxiously heaps the glowing coals over the sock which he wishes to weld, or the coulter he has to sharpen, and drops in a word now and then in the conversation maintained among his customers and auditors. All at once out comes the blazing iron from the fire—flash after flash passes over the faces of the gathered groups—the quick clang of hammers is heard—the smithy darkens down as the iron cools, and when it is restored to the fire for another heat, the controversy of tongues is renewed, and so the evening passes. Blair intimated by his remark that the opinions of the Poet respecting the American war were unstatesmanlike, and only worthy of rude, ready-witted ploughmen.

THE DEAN OF FACULTY.

A NEW BALLAD.

I.

DIRE was the hate at old Harlaw,
That Scot to Scot did carry;
And dire the discord Langside saw,
For beauteous, hapless Mary:
But Scot with Scot ne'er met so hot,
Or were more in fury seen, Sir,
Than 'twixt Hal and Bob for the famous job—
Who should be Faculty's Dean, Sir.—

II.

This Hal for genius, wit, and lore,
Among the first was number'd;
But pious Bob, 'mid learning's store,
Commandment tenth remember'd.—
Yet simple Bob the victory got,
And won his heart's desire;
Which shews that heaven can boil the pot,
Though the devil p—s in the fire.—

III.

Squire Hal besides had in this case
Pretensions rather brassy,
For talents to deserve a place
Are qualifications saucy;

So, their worships of the Faculty,
Quite sick of merit's rudeness,
Chose one who should owe it all, d'ye see,
To their gratis grace and goodness.—

IV.

As once on Pisgah purg'd was the sight
Of a son of Circumcision,
So may be, on this Pisgah height,
Bob's purblind, mental vision:
Nay, Bobby's mouth may be open'd yet
Till for eloquence you hail him,
And swear he has the Angel met
That met the Ass of Balaam.

No one has equalled Lockhart's account of Burns among the stately literati and lawyers of Edinburgh:—"It needs no effort of imagination to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars must have been in the presence of this big-boned, black-browed, brawny stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole train of his hearing and conversation a most thorough conviction that, in the society of the most eminent men of his nation, he was exactly where he was entitled to be, hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice, by turns calmly measured himself against the most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion—overpowered the bon-mots of the most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, impregnated with all the burning life of genius—

astounded bosoms habitually enveloped in the thrice-piled folds of social reserve by compelling them to tremble beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos—and all this without the smallest willingness to be ranked among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it.

"The lawyers of Edinburgh, among whom Burns figured at his outset with at least as much success as among the professional literati, were a very different race of men from these ; they would neither, I take it, have pardoned rudeness nor been alarmed by wit. But, being in those days, with scarcely an exception, members of the landed aristocracy of the country, and forming by far the most influential body in the society of Scotland, they were, perhaps, as proud a set of men as ever enjoyed the tranquil pleasures of unquestioned superiority. What their haughtiness as a body was, may be guessed when we know that inferior birth was reckoned a fair and legitimate ground for excluding any man from the bar. To this body belonged nineteen out of twenty of those 'Patricians,' whose stateliness Burns so long remembered, and so bitterly resented. It might, perhaps, have been well for him had stateliness been the worst fault of their manners."

The poem was first published in the Reliques of Burns. It explains itself. I have heard that it was any thing but graciously received by the two competitors, Hal and Bob.

TO A LADY,

With a Present of a Pair of Drinking-Glasses.

FAIR Empress of the Poet's soul,
  And Queen of Poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
  This humble pair of glasses.

And fill them high with generous juice,
  As generous as your mind;
And pledge me in the generous toast—
  "The whole of human kind!"

"To those who love us!"—second fill;
  But not to those whom we love;
Lest we love those who love not us!—
  A third—"to thee and me, love!"

To the beautiful Clarinda—the Mrs. Mac. whom he loved to toast in company—Burns addressed a number of letters; some are written with tenderness and feeling, others are bold and vehement; and they all shew the ardour of an impassioned heart, and sometimes the quickness of a clear understanding. That the lady regarded the whole as a sort of sentimental flirtation on paper, there can be no doubt.—"I can say with truth, madam," he thus opens the correspondence, "that I

never met with a person in my life whom I more anxiously wished to meet again than yourself. You are a stranger to me; but I am an odd being; some yet unnamed feelings, things, not principles, but better than whims, carry me further than boasted reason ever did a philosopher. Our worthy common friend, in her usual pleasant way, rallied me a good deal on my new acquaintance. She tells me you are not only a critic, but a poetess."

Of the powers of Clarinda in rhyme, I shall give a specimen, such as will induce the reader to desire more.—" Your last verses," says Burns, " have so delighted me, that I have got an excellent old Scots air that suits the measure, and you shall see them in print. I want four stanzas—you gave me but three, and one of them alluded to an expression in my former letter; so I have taken your two first verses, with a slight alteration in the second, and have added a third, but you must help me to a fourth. Here they are; the latter half of the first stanza is worthy of Sappho; I am in raptures with it:"—

" Talk not of love, it gives me pain,
For love has been my foe;
He bound me with an iron chain,
And plung'd me deep in woe.
But friendship's pure and lasting joys
My heart was formed to prove—
Then welcome win and wear the prize,
But never talk of love.

Your friendship much can make me blest,
Oh! why that bliss destroy?
Why urge the only one request
You know I will deny?
Your thought, if love must harbour there,
Conceal it in that thought;
Nor cause me from that bosom tear
The very friend I sought."

CLARINDA.

Clarinda, mistress of my soul,
The measur'd time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary pole
So marks his latest sun.

To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall poor Sylvander hie;
Depriv'd of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy.

We part—but, by these precious drops
That fill thy lovely eyes!
No other light shall guide my steps
Till thy bright beams arise.

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
Has blest my glorious day;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
My worship to its ray?

The Bard had recovered from his fall, and was contemplating his departure from Edinburgh, when he wrote these verses to "Clarinda." He sent her, it appears, a copy of the account which he gave of himself to Dr. Moore, and added, "I do not know if you have a just idea of my character; but I wish you to see me, as I am,

as most people of my trade are, a strange will-o'-wisp being the victim, too frequently, of much imprudence and many follies. My two great constituent elements are pride and passion: the first I have endeavoured to harmonize into integrity and honour; the last makes me a devotee to the warmest degree of enthusiasm in love, religion, or friendship—either of them, or altogether, as I happen to be inspired."

Having explained or apologized respecting his feelings and his prejudices, the Poet proceeds:—"What a strange mysterious faculty is that thing called imagination! I have often amused myself with visionary schemes of what happiness in another world might be enjoyed by small alterations—alterations that we can fully enter into in this present state of existence. For instance, suppose you and I, just as we are at present—the same reasoning powers, sentiments, and even desires; the same fond curiosity for knowledge and remarking observation in our minds; and imagine our bodies free from pain, and the necessary supplies for the wants of nature, at all times and easily within our reach: imagine, farther, that we were set free from the laws of gravitation which bind us to this globe, and could at pleasure fly without inconvenience through all the yet unconjectured bounds of creation—what a life of bliss would we lead in our mutual pursuit of virtue and knowledge, and our mutual enjoyment of friendship and love! I see you laughing at my fairy fancies, but I am certain I would be a happy creature beyond any thing we call bliss here below; nay, it would be a paradise congenial to you, too. Don't you see us hand in hand, making our remarks on Sirius, the nearest of the fixed stars; or surveying a comet flaming innoxious by us, as we just now would mark the passing pomp of a travelling monarch."

VERSES.

Written under the Portrait of Fergusson, the Poet, in a copy of that Author's works presented to a young Lady in Edinburgh, March 19*th*, 1787.

Curse on ungrateful man, that can be pleas'd,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure!
O thou my elder brother in misfortune,
By far my elder brother in the muses,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate!
Why is the bard unpitied by the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?

This apostrophe to Fergusson, bears a striking affinity to one in the " Epistle to William Simpson :"—

" O Fergusson ! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry musty arts;
My curse upon your whunstane hearts,
Ye E'nbrugh gentry !
The tythe o' what ye waste at cartes,
Wad stow'd his pantry !"

This was written before Burns visited the Scottish capital. Even without a poet's susceptibility, we may feel how this prophetic parallel of Fergusson's case with his own must have pressed on the memory of our bard, when he paid this second tribute of affection to his " elder brother" in misfortune.

SKETCH.

A LITTLE, upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets:
A man of fashion, too, he made his tour,
Learn'd vive la bagatelle, et vive l'amour;
So travell'd monkeys their grimace improve,
Polish their grin, nay, sigh for ladies' love.
Much specious lore, but little understood;
Veneering oft outshines the solid wood:
His solid sense—by inches you must tell,
But mete his cunning by the old Scots ell;
His meddling vanity, a busy fiend,
Still making work his selfish craft must mend.

The "Sketch" was a portion of a long poem which Burns contemplated, called "The Poet's Progress." He, however, completed no more than the little contained in this page; perhaps the response of Dugald Stewart, to whom he communicated the sketch, damped his ardour.—"The fragment," says Burns, "beginning 'A little, upright, pert, tart,' &c., I have not shewn to any man living till I now shew it to you. It forms the postulata, the axioms, the definition of a character, which, if it appear at all, shall be placed in a variety of lights. This particular part I send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait sketching."

TO

MRS. SCOTT,

OF

WAUCHOPE.

I MIND it weel in early date,
When I was beardless, young and blate,
An' first could thresh the barn;
Or haud a yokin at the pleugh;
An' tho' forfoughten sair eneugh,
Yet unco proud to learn:
When first amang the yellow corn
A man I reckon'd was,
An' wi' the lave ilk merry morn
Could rank my rig and lass,
Still shearing, and clearing,
The tither stooked raw,
Wi' claivers, an' haivers,
Wearing the day awa.

E'en then, a wish, I mind its pow'r,
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake
Some usefu' plan or beuk could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spar'd the symbol dear:
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise,
A Scot still, but blot still,
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain;
'Till on that har'st I said before,
My partner in the merry core,
She rous'd the forming strain:
I see her yet, the sonsie quean,
That lighted up her jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauky een
That gart my heart-strings tingle:
I fired, inspired,
At every kindling keek,
But bashing and dashing
I feared aye to speak.

Health to the sex, ilk guid chiel says,
Wi' merry dance in winter days,
An' we to share in common :
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe,
The saul o' life, the heav'n below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumphs, who hate the name
Be mindfu' o' your mither :
She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye're connected with her,
Ye're wae men, ye're nae men
That slight the lovely dears .
To shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ilk honest birkie swears.

For you, no bred to barn and byre,
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line .
The marled plaid ye kindly spare,
By me should gratefully be ware ;
'Twad please me to the nine.
I'd be mair vauntie o' my hap,
Douce hingin' owre my curple,
Than ony ermine ever lap,
Or proud imperial purple.
Fareweel then, lang heal then
An' plenty be your fa'
May losses and crosses
Ne'er at your hallan ca'.

This beautiful little poem is now given entire.—"Oh! that he, the prevailing Poet," says Wilson, speaking of the aspirations of his youth, "could have seen this light breaking in upon the darkness that did too long and too deeply overshadow his living lot! Some glorious glimpses of it his prophetic soul did see—witness 'The Vision,' or that somewhat humbler but yet high strain—in which, bethinking him of the undefined aspirations of his boyish genius that had bestirred itself in the darkness, as if the touch of an angel's hand were to awaken a sleeper in his cell—he said to himself:—

'Even then a wish, I mind its power.
A wish that to my latest hour,
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan, or beuk could make,
Or sing a sang at least.'

"Such hopes were in him, in his 'bright and shining youth,' surrounded as it was with toil and trouble, that could not bend down the brow of Burns from its natural upright inclination to the sky: and such hopes, let us doubt it not, were with him in his dark and faded prime, when life's lamp burned low indeed, and he was willing at last, early as it was, to shut his eyes on this dearly beloved, but sorely distracting world."

The lady to whom the Epistle is addressed, was a painter and poetess: her sketches with the pencil were very beautiful; of her skill in verse, the reader may judge from her letter to the bard:—

"My cantie, witty, rhyming ploughman,
I haffins doubt it is na' true, man,
That ye between the stilts was bred,
Wi' ploughmen schooled, wi' ploughmen fed;
I doubt it sair, ye've drawn your knowledge
Either frae grammar-school or college,
Guid troth your saul an' body baith
War better fed I'd gie my aith,
Than theirs who sup sour milk an' parritch,
An' bummil through the single Carritch.

Whaever heard the ploughman speak,
Could tell gif Homer was a Greek?
He'd flee as soon upon a cudgel,
As get a single line of Virgil.
And then sae slee ye crack your jokes
O' Willie Pitt and Charlie Fox:
Our great men a' sae weel descrive,
An' how to gar the nation thrive,
Ane maist wad swear ye dwalt amang them,
And as ye saw them sae ye sang them.
But be ye ploughman, be ye peer,
Ye are a funny blade I swear:
An' though the cauld I ill can bide,
Yet twenty miles an' mair I'd ride
O'er moss an' moor, an' never grumble,
Though my auld yad should gie a stumble,
To crack a winter night wi' thee,
An' hear thy sangs an' sonnets slee.
O gif I kenned but where ye baide,
I'd send to you a marled plaid;
'Twad haud your shouthers warm an' braw,
An' douce at kirk or market shaw;
Fra' south as weel as north my lad,
A' honest Scotsmen lo'e the maud."

Mrs. Scott of Wauchope was niece to Mrs. Cockburn, authoress of a beautiful variation of "The Flowers of the Forest:" she has been long dead.

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM CREECH.

WRITTEN AT SELKIRK.

Auld chuckie Reekie's* sair distrest,
Down droops her ance weel-burnisht crest,
Nae joy her bonnie buskit nest
Can yield ava,
Her darling bird that she lo'es best,
Willie's awa!

O Willie was a witty wight,
And had o' things an unco slight;
Auld Reekie ay he keepit tight.
An' trig an' braw:
But now they'll busk her like a fright,
Willie's awa!

The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd;
The bauldest o' them a' he cow'd;
They durst nae mair than he allow'd,
That was a law:
We've lost a birkie weel worth gowd,
Willie's awa!

* Edinburgh.

Now gawkies, tawpies, gowks, and fools,
Frae colleges and boarding-schools,
May sprout like simmer puddock-stools
In glen or shaw;
He wha could brush them down to mools,
Willie's awa!

The brethren o' the Commerce-Chaumer *
May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' clamour:
He was a dictionar and grammar
Amang them a';
I fear they'll now mak mony a stammer,
Willie's awa!

Nae mair we see his levee door
Philosophers and poets pour,†
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw!
The adjutant o' a' the core,
Willie's awa!

Now worthy Gregory's latin face,
Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace;
Mackenzie, Stewart, sic a brace
As Rome ne'er saw;
They a' maun meet some ither place,
Willie's awa!

* The Chamber of Commerce at Edinburgh, of which Creech was Secretary.

† Many literary gentlemen were accustomed to meet at Mr. Creech's house at breakfast.

Poor Burns—e'en Scotch drink canna quicken,
He cheeps like some bewilder'd chicken,
Scar'd frae its minnie and the cleckin
By hoodie-craw;
Grief's gien his heart an unco kickin',
Willie's awa!

Now ev'ry sour-mou'd girnin' blellum,
And Calvin's fock, are fit to fell him;
And self-conceited critic skellum
His quill may draw;
He wha could brawlie ward their bellum,
Willie's awa!

Up wimpling stately Tweed I've sped,
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks now roaring red,
While tempests blaw;
But every joy and pleasure's fled,
Willie's awa!

May I be slander's common speech;
A text for infamy to preach;
And lastly, streekit out to bleach
In winter snaw;
When I forget thee! Willie Creech,
Tho' far awa!

May never wicked fortune touzle him!
May never wicked men bamboozle him!
Until a pow as auld's Methusalem
He canty claw!
Then to the blessed New Jerusalem,
Fleet wing awa!

The "Epistle to William Creech" was the sole poetic fruit of the Border tour of Burns. It was written on the 13th of May, 1787, and forwarded in a letter commencing thus:—"My honoured friend—The enclosed I have just wrote, nearly extempore, at a solitary inn at Selkirk, after a miserable wet day's riding. I have been over most of East Lothian, Berwick, Roxburgh, and Selkirkshires; and next week I begin a tour through the north of England."

The eminent bookseller to whom this Epistle is addressed was a very singular person: he was the son of the minister of Newbattle, and by his mother, connected with a noble family in Devonshire. He was a good classical scholar; was educated for the medical profession, but finally resolving to be a bookseller, apprenticed himself to Kincaid of Edinburgh. He forsook however the business for a time, and went on a tour to the Continent, with Lord Kilmaurs, afterwards Earl of Glencairn. On his return, he became partner with Kincaid, who soon retired, leaving Creech in sole possession of the business, which he carried on for forty-four years with great success. He was not only the most popular bookseller in the north, but he published the writings of almost all the distinguished men who adorned Scottish literature to-

wards the close of the eighteenth century. His shop occupied a conspicuous place in the centre of the Old Town, and it was his pleasure to give breakfasts to his authors: these meetings were called Creech's levees. He not only encouraged authors, but he wrote prose himself. He published a volume of trifles under the name of "Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces," which was re-printed in 1815.

"Mr. Creech's style of composition," says Robert Chambers, in his valuable 'Scottish Biography,' "is only worthy of being spoken of with respect to its ironical humour. In private life he shone conspicuously as a pleasant companion and conversationist, being possessed of an inexhaustible fund of droll anecdote, which he could narrate in a characteristic manner, and with unfailing effect. He thus secured general esteem, in despite, it appeared, of extraordinary fondness for money and penuriousness of habits, which acted to the preclusion, not only of all benevolence of disposition, but even of the common honesty of discharging his obligations when they were due." In these concluding words the secret of the long abode of Burns in Edinburgh is explained, and also some passages in his letters expressing doubt and apprehension. Creech would not part with the money due to the Poet on his works, and the Poet could not enter into farming speculations with an empty pocket.

THE

HUMBLE PETITION

OF

BRUAR WATER*

TO THE

NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

I.

MY Lord, I know your noble ear
  Woe ne'er assails in vain;
Embolden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
  Your humble slave complain,
How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
  In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
  And drink my crystal tide.

* Bruar Falls, in Athole, are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs.

II.

The lightly-jumpin' glowrin' trouts,
That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts,
They near the margin stray;
If, hapless chance! they linger lang,
I'm scorching up so shallow,
They're left the whitening stanes amang,
In gasping death to wallow.

III.

Last day I grat wi' spite and teen,
As Poet Burns came by,
That to a bard I should be seen
Wi' half my channel dry:
A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
Even as I was he shor'd me;
But had I in my glory been,
He, kneeling, wad ador'd me.

IV.

Here, foaming down the shelvy rocks,
In twisting strength I rin;
There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
Wild-roaring o'er a linn:
Enjoying large each spring and well,
As Nature gave them me,
I am, altho' I say't mysel,
Worth gaun a mile to see.

V.

Would then my noble master please
To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees,
And bonnie spreading bushes.
Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

VI.

The sober laverock, warbling wild,
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdspink, music's gayest child,
Shall sweetly join the choir:
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite clear,
The mavis mild and mellow;
The robin pensive autumn cheer,
In all her locks of yellow.

VII.

This, too, a covert shall insure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maukin sleep secure,
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flow'rs;
Or find a shelt'ring safe retreat
From prone descending show'rs.

VIII.

And here, by sweet endearing stealth,
Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds with all their wealth
As empty idle care.
The flow'rs shall vie in all their charms
The hour of heav'n to grace,
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

IX.

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain gray;
Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild-chequering thro' the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Hoarse swelling on the breeze.

X.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry bed!
Let fragrant birks in woodbines drest
My craggy cliffs adorn;
And, for the little songster's nest,
The close embow'ring thorn.

XI.

So may old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band,
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honour'd native land!
So may thro' Albion's farthest ken,
To social-flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonnie lasses!"

"The first object of interest," says Chambers, "that occurs upon the public road after leaving Blair, is a chasm in the hill on the right hand, through which the little river Bruar falls over a series of beautiful cascades. Formerly, the falls of the Bruar were unadorned by wood; but the Poet Burns, being conducted to see them (Sep. 1787), by his friend the Duke of Athole, recommended that they should be invested with that necessary decoration—a plantation. Trees have been thickly planted along the chasm, and are now far advanced to maturity. Throughout this young forest, a walk has been cut, and a number of fantastic little grottoes erected for the conveniency of those who visit the spot. The river not only makes several distinct falls, but rushes on through a channel, whose roughness and haggard sublimity adds greatly to the merits of the scene, as an object of interest among tourists."

Speaking of this visit of Burns to the Bruar, and of the origin of the poem, Professor Walker says, "He passed two or three days with the Duke of Athole, and was highly delighted by the attention he received, and the

company to whom he was introduced. These, on the other hand, were no less pleased with the correct and manly deportment of the interesting stranger. As the hour of supper was distant, he begged I would guide him through the grounds. It was already growing dark; yet the softened, though faint and uncertain, view of their beauties which the moonlight afforded us, seemed exactly suited to the state of his feelings at the time. When we reached a rustic hut on the river Tilt, where it is overhung by a woody precipice, he threw himself on the heathy seat, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and voluptuous enthusiasm of imagination. By the Duke's advice he visited the Falls of Bruar, and in a few days I received a letter from Inverness, with the verses enclosed."

"I have just time," says the Poet to Walker, "to write the foregoing, and to tell you that it was (at least most part of it) the effusion of an half-hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was *extempore*, for I have endeavoured to brush it up as well as Mr. Nicol's chat and the jogging of the chaise would allow. It eases my heart a good deal, as rhyme is the coin with which a poet pays his debts of honour or gratitude. What I owe to the noble family of Athole, of the first kind, I shall ever proudly boast; what I owe to the last, so help me God in my hour of need! I shall never forget."

ON

SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL

IN LOCH-TURIT,

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OCHTERTYRE.

Why, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below:
Plumes himself in Freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels:
But man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his pow'rs you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

Burns visited Ochtertyre and Loch-Turit in the company of Nicol, during his third northern tour. The fine humanities which distinguish "The Mouse" and "The

Daisy," another of his productions. seem to have been active within him on this last of his Highland excursions

" Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus ye fly ?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties ?—
Common friend to you and me,
Natures gifts to all are free."

He was staying, when he wrote these touching lines, with Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre. Other inspirations came upon him. He met Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, commonly called " The Flower of Strathmore," and celebrated her beauty in that fine lyric, beginning—

" Blythe, blythe, an' merry was she,
Blythe was she, but and ben ;
Blythe by the banks of Earn,
And blythe in Glenturit Glen."

" The house of Ochtertyre," observes Chambers, " is little and over-neat; but its situation on an eminence starting from the face of a hill, and its glorious park, and lake, and trees, and all its other sunny lovelinesses, render it, nevertheless, one of the most delightful seats in broad Scotland. It has been spoken of in terms of rapture by all literary travellers, including Burns, who spent some time here, and has rendered the adjacent vale of the Turit altogether classical by his glowing pen."

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL

OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE, IN THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.

Admiring Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
'Till fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.—
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild scatter'd, clothe their ample sides;
Th' outstretching lake, imbosomed 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay, meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace, rising on its verdant side;
The lawns, wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste;
The hillocks, dropt in Nature's careless haste;
The arches, striding o'er the new-born stream;
The village, glittering in the noontide beam—

* * * *

Poetic ardors in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell:

The sweeping theatre of hanging woods;
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—

* * * *

Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
And look through nature with creative fire;
Here, to the wrongs of fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter—rankling wounds:
Here heart-struck Grief might heav'nward stretch her scan,
And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.

* * * *

Burns, like all travellers of taste, was struck with the magnificent scene, of which the splendid castle of the the Earl of Breadalbane can scarcely be called the chief attraction.—"The house," says Chambers, "is after the fashion of Inverary, with circular turrets at the corners, and a minor tower rising prominent above, together with several additional portions of less altitude, though equally beautiful architecture. It contains one of the best collections of pictures in Scotland." Among the pictures are many of the portraits of Jameson. The vale is bounded by lofty, abrupt, and finely wooded hills, and though not spacious enough to admit a well-laid lawn and park, such as adorn the baronial residences of the south, yet the stream, and vale, and upland unite in forming a landscape wondrous for its picturesque beauty.

The surface of the ground is always green, and the hoary trees are of great antiquity and size.

The Poet has bestowed some happy lines on this beautiful scene :—

> " The lawns, wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste ;
> The hillocks, dropt in Nature's careless haste ;
> The arches, striding o'er the new-born stream :
> The village, glittering in the noontide beam.'

The images contained in these couplets are worthy of a painter, and show that Burns had a fine eye for what was striking and lovely. All that he says of it in his journal is simply, " Taymouth described in rhyme."

The excursions of the Poet in the north were hurried and abrupt ; his companions, who felt not as he felt, dragged him from rock to rock, and from hill to hill, and, watching his looks, expressed their wonder that he did not burst out into voluntary numbers, whenever they pulled him to a place which the tourists' books had taught them to admire. Professor Walker acted differently—he allowed Burns to choose his own points of view, and followed, rather than led him.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL,

STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS,

NEAR LOCH-NESS.

Among the heathy hills and ragged woods
The foaming Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless beach, his stream resounds,
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep-recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonish'd, rends.
Dim seen, through rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide surrounding, low'rs.
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still below, the horrid cauldron boils—

* * * * * *

Those who wish to see the Fall of Fyers in its true Highland glory, should go, after two days' rain upon the uplands has swollen the stream and filled up the channel, till the banks are all but overflowing. Then, I am told by those who have seen some of the finest cascades in foreign parts as well as in Britain, that, save the falls of Terni, no other can be compared, for romantic beauty, with those of Fyers.—" In its medium fulness," observes

Chambers, "it pours through a narrow gullet in the rock in a round unbroken stream, which gradually whitens as it descends, till it falls into a half-seen profound, upwards of two hundred feet below the point of descent. About a quarter of a mile further up the ravine, there is another cascade, usually called the Upper fall—a fearful gulph, down which the water descends by three leaps, and over which a mean-looking bridge has been thrown, by way of station for a sight of the cataract." These falls are but a short distance from Inverness.

On none of the fine scenes in the lowlands did Burns pen a line, while on the beauties of the Highlands he was fluent and inspired. Ossian's own poetic land abounds with scenes worthy of the pencil of a Wilson or a Turner. The savage magnificence of the mountains, the splendour of the lakes, and the softened elegance of the romantic vales, are only equalled by the picturesque beauty of many of the isles. The landscapes of the Celtic Parnassus—as some one called the land of Ossian—are yet to be painted.

POETICAL ADDRESS

TO

MR. W. TYTLER,

WITH THE PRESENT OF THE BARD'S PICTURE.

REVERED defender of beauteous Stuart,
Of Stuart, a name once respected,
A name, which to love, was the mark of a true heart
But now 'tis despis'd and neglected.

Tho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
A poor friendless wand'rer may well claim a sigh,
Still more, if that wand'rer were royal.

My fathers that name have rever'd on a throne;
My fathers have fallen to right it;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should he scoffingly slight it.

Still in prayers for King George I most heartily join,
The Queen, and the rest of the gentry,
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine;
Their title's avow'd by my country.

But why of this epocha make such a fuss,

But loyalty truce! we're on dangerous ground,
Who knows how the fashions may alter?
The doctrine, to-day, that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us a halter.

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,
A trifle scarce worthy your care;
But accept it, good Sir, as a mark of regard,
Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.

Now life's chilly evening dim shades on your eye,
And ushers the long dreary night:
But you like the star that athwart gilds the sky,
Your course to the latest is bright.

William Tytler, to whom these lines are addressed, wrote, as the verses intimate, an elegant defence of Mary Queen of Scots, which dispersed a little the dark cloud of calumny which had hung for centuries over her head. His son is well known, in Scottish law and literature, by the title of Lord Woodehouselee; his taste in poetry was of the first order, nor was he unskilful in music: he is called by Lord Byron a voluminous writer, and placed

at the head of the Scotch literati : his grandson, Patrick Fraser Tytler, is still more distinguished : his Biographies of eminent Scotsmen are full of research and new intelligence ; but his chief work is his "History of Scotland," which promises, when completed, to surpass all other works on the subject for accuracy, and equal the best of them in eloquence of narrative and true delineation of character.

In the letter enclosing these stanzas, Burns says, "My muse jilted me here, and turned a corner on me, and I have not got again into her good graces." There was a good deal of stately jacobitism in Edinburgh in those days : and it is probable, from the tone of this address, that the "revered defender of beauteous Stuart" was numbered among them. His father, who was from Aberdeen, inherited much of the Highland love for our old line of princes. The margins of his books bore evidence of his regard for the "line of Bruce." The feeling is not yet quite extinct. When his late Majesty left Edinburgh, and the songs in his praise had ceased, a Highland piper ventured out, and playing up "Ye're welcome, Charlie Stuart!" gathered a crowd, who soon bought up his ballads ; they were cheered with the thoughts of "Auld lang syne."

WRITTEN IN FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE,

ON THE BANKS OF NITH.

[FIRST COPY.]

Thou whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these maxims on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;
Day, how rapid in its flight—
Day, how few must see the night;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lower.
Happiness is but a name,
Make content and ease thy aim.
Ambition is a meteor gleam;
Fame a restless idle dream:

Pleasures, insects on the wing
Round Peace, the tenderest flower of Spring
Those that sip the dew alone,
Make the butterflies thy own;
Those that would the bloom devour,
Crush the locusts—save the flower.
For the future be prepar'd,
Guard wherever thou can'st guard;
But thy utmost duly done,
Welcome what thou can'st not shun.
Follies past, give thou to air,
Make their consequence thy care:
Keep the name of man in mind,
And dishonour not thy kind.
Reverence with lowly heart,
Him whose wondrous work thou art;
Keep his goodness still in view,
Thy trust—and thy example, too.

Stranger, go! Heaven be thy guide!
Quod, the Beadsman on Nithside.

The kindness of my friend Mrs. Hyslop has enabled me to give, from the interleaved volume which belonged to Dr. Geddes, the original rough draught of this poem. It is seldom, indeed, that Burns bestowed so much labour on his compositions: he thought so well, however, of this, that he preserved the variations, as eminent

painters preserve the first and second thoughts of their best pictures. It appears that he wrote the first version in June, 1788: the amended and enlarged copy follows, in the manuscript, with this heading—"Altered from the foregoing, December, 1788." Some of the changes are curious, and will be felt by the reader: in the improved version I find the lines—

"Wast thou cottager or king?
Peer or peasant?—no such thing!"

These and other lines are not in the edition published by Currie or Gilbert Burns. Had the poem been in his native dialect, it would have come full and finished from his fancy; his sentiments, when he wrote in the Scottish language, put on at once their proper costume of words, and he had few changes to make. He wrote English with the fear of the critics before him.

So highly did the Poet think of this poem, that he wrote out many copies and forwarded them to his friends—a number of these are still in existence. He looked upon it as an attempt to rise out of rustic Scotch into classic English: the gentle praise bestowed showed him what was felt—that he had not equalled the happiness of expression in some of his earlier pieces.

WRITTEN

IN

FRIARS-CARSE HERMITAGE,

ON NITHSIDE.

[SECOND COPY.]

Thou whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these counsels on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;
Hope not sunshine ev'ry hour,
Fear not clouds will always lower.

As youth and love with sprightly dance,
Beneath thy morning star advance,
Pleasure with her siren air
May delude the thoughtless pair;
Let Prudence bless Enjoyment's cup,
Then raptur'd sip, and sip it up.

As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridian flaming nigh,
Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits would'st thou scale?
Check thy climbing step, elate,
Evils lurk in felon wait:
Dangers, eagle-pinion'd, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold,
While cheerful peace, with linnet song,
Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of ev'ning close,
Beck'ning thee to long repose;
As life itself becomes disease,
Seek the chimney-neuk of ease,
There ruminate with sober thought,
On all thou'st seen, and heard, and wrought:
And teach the sportive younkers round,
Saws of experience, sage and sound.
Say, man's true, genuine estimate,
The grand criterion of his fate,
Is not—Art thou high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Wast thou cottager or king?
Peer or peasant?—no such thing!
Did many talents gild thy span?
Or frugal nature grudge thee one?
Tell them, and press it on their mind,
As thou thyself must shortly find,

The smile or frown of awful Heav'n,
To virtue or to vice is giv'n.
Say, to be just, and kind, and wise,
There solid self-enjoyment lies;
That foolish, selfish, faithless ways
Lead to the wretched, vile, and base.

Thus resign'd and quiet, creep
To the bed of lasting sleep;
Sleep, whence thou shalt ne'er awake,
Night, where dawn shall never break.
'Till future life, future no more,
To light and joy the good restore,
To light and joy unknown before.

Stranger, go! Heav'n be thy guide!
Quod the beadsman of Nith-side.

The hermitage in which these elegant lines were written was the property of Captain Riddel, a distinguished antiquarian, who lived at Friars-Carse some mile or so above Ellisland. A small door admitted the Poet at his own pleasure into the wood where the Hermitage was built; there he found such seclusion as he loved; flowers and shrubs were thickly planted round the place, and in the interior were chairs and a table for the accommodation of visiters. The first dozen lines of the poem, or perhaps more, were inscribed with a diamond,

which Burns ever carried about with him, on a pane of glass in the window. While Riddel lived, and even during the life of Burns, the verses were respected; the proprietor, however, at length removed them and had them secured in a frame.

Friars-Carse is altogether one of the loveliest spots on the Nith · the natural beauty of the place was much improved by the taste of the antiquarian. He formed picturesque lines of road; planted elegant shrubberies; raised a rude Druidic temple on the summit of a rough precipitous hill, which over-towers the Nith, and in all the chief walks of his grounds he placed many rare and valuable reliques of Scotland's elder day · such as sculptured troughs, ornamented crosses, and inscribed altars which he had collected at much outlay from all parts of Scotland.—"I shall transcribe for you," says Burns to Mrs. Dunlop, "a few lines I wrote in a hermitage, belonging to a gentleman in my Nithsdale neighbourhood. They are almost the only favours the muses have conferred on me in this country."

TO CAPTAIN RIDDEL,

OF GLENRIDDEL.

EXTEMPORE LINES ON RETURNING A NEWSPAPER.

Ellisland, Monday Evening.

Your news and review, Sir, I've read through and through, Sir,
With little admiring or blaming;
The papers are barren of home-news or foreign,
No murders or rapes worth the naming.

Our friends, the reviewers, those chippers and hewers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, Sir;
But of *meet* or *unmeet*, in a *fabric complete*,
I'll boldly pronounce they are none, Sir.

My goose-quill too rude is to tell all your goodness
Bestow'd on your servant, the Poet;
Would to God I had one like a beam of the sun,
And then all the world, Sir, should know it!

The review which Captain Riddel sent to the Bard contained some sharp strictures on his poetry. Burns estimated at once the right value of all such criticisms: he felt that true genius had nothing to dread, and that dulness and stupidity would sink, from their own weight, without the aid of satire. In another place, when speaking of the "chippers and hewers," he questions their jurisdiction, and claims to be tried by his peers. His peers could not easily be found, so the Poet was safe. He seemed to imagine that critics should first shew their feeling in original composition, before they commenced judges by trade, and was half inclined to complain, with Pope, that—

—— "Not one sprig of laurel graced those ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibbalds."

Burns was a frequent guest at the board of Glenriddel, and, as he returned to Ellisland, loved to linger on Nith-side,

"Delighted with the dashing roar,"

when the river, swollen, perhaps, with rains on the mountains, was rough and raging, and

"Chafed against the scaurs red side,"

on the summit of which he had built his abode.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT

FOR

THE DEATH OF HER SON.

FATE gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart;
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.
By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonour'd laid:
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravish'd young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.
Death, oft I've fear'd thy fatal blow,
Now, fond I bare my breast,
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

"The Mother's Lament," says the Poet, in a copy of the poem now before me, "was composed partly with a view to Mrs. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, and partly to the worthy patroness of my early unknown muse, Mrs. Stewart of Afton."

FIRST EPISTLE

TO R. GRAHAM, Esq.

OF FINTRAY.

When Nature her great master-piece designed,
And fram'd her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She form'd of various parts the various man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth;
Plain plodding industry, and sober worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchandise' whole genus take their birth:
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many-apron'd kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net;
The *caput mortuum* of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires;
The martial phosphorus is taught to flow,
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th' unyielding mass with grave designs,
Law, physic, politics, and deep divines:
Last, she sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.

The order'd system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleas'd, pronounc'd it very good;
But ere she gave creating labour o'er,
Half-jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some spumy, fiery, *ignis fatuus* matter,
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter;
With arch alacrity and conscious glee
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it)
She forms the thing, and christens it—a poet,
Creature, tho' oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day, unmindful of to-morrow.
A being form'd t'amuse his graver friends,
Admir'd and prais'd—and there the homage ends:
A mortal quite unfit for fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live;
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.

But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,
She laugh'd at first, then felt for her poor work.
Pitying the propless climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find;
And, to support his helpless woodbine state,
Attach'd him to the generous truly great,

A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous Graham.

Pity the tuneful muses' hapless train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main!
Their hearts no selfish stern absorbent stuff,
That never gives—tho' humbly takes enough;
The little fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage proverb'd wisdom's hard-wrung boon.
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,
Ah, that "the friendly e'er should want a friend!"
Let prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason and who give by rule,
(Instinct's a brute, and sentiment a fool!)
Who make poor will do wait upon I should—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good?
Ye wise ones, hence! ye hurt the social eye!
God's image rudely etch'd on base alloy!
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguished—to bestow!
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race:
Come thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace;
Friend of my life, true patron of my rhymes!
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul half blushing, half afraid,
Backward, abash'd to ask thy friendly aid?

I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave thy friendship at thy kind command;
But there are such who court the tuneful nine—
Heavens! should the branded character be mine!
Whose verse in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging prose.
Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injur'd merit!
Seek not the proofs in private life to find;
Pity the best of words should be but wind!
So to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.
In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun benevolence with shameless front;
Oblige them, patronize their tinsel lays,
They persecute you all your future days!
Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My horny fist assume the plough again;
The pie-bald jacket let me patch once more;
On eighteen-pence a week I've liv'd before.
Tho', thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift!
I trust, meantime, my boon is in thy gift:
That, plac'd by thee upon the wish'd-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,
My muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

Burns enters this poem in his manuscripts as "accompanying a request." What that request was, the letter

which enclosed it sufficiently shows:—"You know, I dare say," he observes, "of an application I lately made to your Board to be admitted an officer of Excise.—I have, according to form, been examined by a supervisor, and to-day I gave in his certificate, with a request for an order for instructions. I had intended to have closed my late appearance on the stage of life in the character of a country farmer; but, after discharging some filial and fraternal claims, I find I could only fight for existence in that miserable manner, which I lived to see throw a venerable parent into the jaws of a jail; whence death, the poor man's last, and often best, friend, rescued him. I know, Sir, that to need your goodness is to have a claim on it: may I, therefore, beg your patronage to forward me in this affair, till I be appointed to a division, where, by the help of rigid economy, I will try to support that independence so dear to my soul, but which has been too often distant from my situation."

The division to which the Poet was appointed included ten country parishes, and took up much of the attention which Ellisland required. The manuscript of the poem now before me is united with the "Lines on the Hermitage," and endorsed thus:—"The three foregoing poems are the favour of the Nithsdale muses."

ON THE DEATH OF
SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.

The lamp of day with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast howl'd thro' the darkening air,
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train;*
Or mus'd where limpid streams once hallow'd well,†
Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fane.‡

Th' increasing blast roared round the beetling rocks,
The clouds, swift-wing'd, flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And 'mong the cliffs disclos'd a stately form,
In weeds of woe that frantic beat her breast,
And mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

* The King's Park, at Holyrood-house.
† St. Anthony's Well. ‡ St. Anthony's Chapel.

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow,
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I view'd :
Her form majestic droop'd in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war,
Reclined that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.—

" My patriot son fills an untimely grave!"
With accents wild and lifted arms—she cried ;
" Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride.

" A weeping country joins a widow's tear,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry ;
The drooping arts surround their patron's bier,
And grateful science heaves the heart-felt sigh !

" I saw my sons resume their ancient fire ;
I saw fair freedom's blossoms richly blow :
But ah ! how hope is born but to expire !
Relentless fate has laid their guardian low.

" My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name !
No ; every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtue last;
That distant years may boast of other Blairs!"—
She said, and vanish'd with the sweeping blast.

In one of the Poet's memorandum-books I once saw these verses written with a pencil: he intimated that he had just composed them, and noted them down lest they should escape from his memory. No alterations appeared in any of the lines, and I remember enough of them to enable me to say that they differed in nothing from the printed copy. They were admitted into the first Liverpool edition, but excluded from others. I now replace them among the works of Burns. The observations which were made on his English compositions apply forcibly to these verses: the sentiments are natural, but the language is too cumbrous—the Poet labours, but not very successfully.

EPISTLE

TO HUGH PARKER.

In this strange land, this uncouth clime,
A land unknown to prose or rhyme;
Where words ne'er crost the muse's heckles,
Nor limpet in poetic shackles;
A land that prose did never view it,
Except when drunk he stacher't thro' it;
Here, ambush'd by the chimla cheek,
Hid in an atmosphere of reek,
I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk,
I hear it—for in vain I leuk.—
The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,
Enhusked by a fog infernal:
Here, for my wonted rhyming raptures,
I sit and count my sins by chapters;
For life and spunk like ither Christians,
I'm dwindled down to mere existence,
Wi' nae converse but Gallowa' bodies,
Wi' nae kend face but Jenny Geddes.*

* His mare.

Jenny, my Pegasean pride!
Dowie she saunters down Nithside,
And ay a westlin leuk she throws,
While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose!
Was it for this, wi' canny care,
Thou bure the Bard through many a shire?
At howes or hillocks never stumbled,
And late or early never grumbled?—
O, had I power like inclination,
I'd heeze thee up a constellation,
To canter with the Sagitarre,
Or loup the ecliptic like a bar;
Or turn the pole like any arrow;
Or, when auld Phebus bids good-morrow,
Down the zodiac urge the race,
And cast dirt on his godship's face;
For I could lay my bread and kail
He'd ne'er cast saut upo' thy tail.—
Wi' a' this care and a' this grief,
And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
And nought but peat reek i' my head,
How can I write what ye can read?—
Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
Ye'll find me in a better tune;
But till we meet and weet our whistle,
Tak this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

This lively epistle, dated June, 1788, was addressed to Hugh Parker of Kilmarnock, one of the Poet's early and stedfast friends; the picture which he gives of himself corresponds with some of his letters; nor is it out of keeping with the account contained in the following letter written 22d Dec., 1788, to Mr John Tennant in Ayr. Hugh Parker has been dead these ten years and upwards. Miller Currie of the Carse-mill has likewise been gathered to his fathers—he was a hospitable and facetious person, and one of the Poet's neighbours when he lived at Ellisland:—

"I yesterday tried my cask of whiskey for the first time, and I assure you it does you great credit. It will bear five waters, strong; or six, ordinary toddy. The whiskey of this country is a most rascally liquor; and, by consequence, only drank by the most rascally part of the inhabitants. I am persuaded, if you once get a footing here, you might do a great deal of business, both in the way of consumpt; and should you commence distiller again, this is the native barley country. I am ignorant if, in your present way of dealing, you would think it worth your while to extend your business so far as this country side. I write you this on the account of an accident which I must take the merit of having partly designed to. A neighbour of mine, a John Currie, miller in Carse-mill—a man who is, in a word, a 'very' good man, even for a £500 bargain—he and his wife were in my house the time I broke open the cask. They keep a country public-house and sell a great deal of foreign spirits, but all along thought that whiskey would have degraded this house. They were perfectly astonished at my whiskey, both for its taste and strength; and by their desire I write you to know if you could supply them with

liquor of an equal quality, and what price. Please write me by first post, and direct to me at Ellisland, near Dumfries. If you could take a jaunt this way yourself, I have a spare spoon, knife and fork very much at your service. My compliments to Mrs. Tennant and all the good folks in Glenconnel and Barguharrie."

Among the letters and memoranda of the Poet, many lines and couplets occur in praise of ale or the "dearest of distillations—last and best." Some are worse—some better than the following :—

"I may be drunk to-night,
I'll never be drunk no more;
But ay where they sell gude ale,
I may look in at the door,"

ELEGY

ON

THE YEAR 1788.

A SKETCH.

For Lords or Kings I dinna mourn,
E'en let them die—for that they're born:
But oh! prodigious to reflec'!
A Towmont, Sirs, is gane to wreck!
O Eighty-eight, in thy sma' space
What dire events ha'e taken place!
Of what enjoyments thou hast reft us!
In what a pickle thou hast left us!

The Spanish empire's tint a-head,
An' my auld teethless Bawtie's dead;
The tulzie's sair 'tween Pitt an' Fox,
And our guid wife's wee birdie cocks;
The tane is game, a bluidie devil,
But to the hen-birds unco civil:
The tither's something dour o' treadin',
But better stuff ne'er claw'd a midden—

Ye ministers, come mount the pu'pit,
An' cry till ye be hearse an' roupet,
For Eighty-eight he wish'd you weel,
An' gied you a' baith gear an' meal;
E'en mony a plack, and mony a peck,
Ye ken yoursels, for little feck!—

Ye bonnie lasses, dight your e'en,
For some o' you ha'e tint a frien';
In Eighty-eight, ye ken, was ta'en,
What ye'll ne'er ha'e to gie again.

Observe the very nowt an' sheep,
How dowf and dowie now they creep;
Nay, even the yirth itsel' does cry,
For embryo' wells are grutten dry.

O Eighty-nine, thou's but a bairn,
An' no owre auld, I hope, to learn!
Thou beardless boy, I pray tak' care,
Thou now has got thy daddy's chair,
Nae hand-cuff'd, muzzl'd, hap-shackl'd Regent,
But, like himsel' a full free agent.
Be sure ye follow out the plan
Nae waur than he did, honest man!
As muckle better as you can.

In such satiric condolences as this Elegy, Burns loved to indulge. The lines were hastily composed, but leisure could not well have made some of them any better. Of the political strife between Pitt and Fox, Scott has said truly—

> "With more than mortal powers endow'd,
> How high they soar'd above the crowd!
> Theirs was no common party race
> Jostling by dark intrigue for place:
> Like fabled gods, their mighty war
> Shook realms and nations in its jar;
> Beneath each banner proud to stand,
> Looked up the noblest of the land;
> Till through the British world were known
> The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
> Spells of such force, no wizard grave
> E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
> Though his could drain the ocean dry,
> And force the planets from the sky."

Yet not less truly has the ploughman Bard intimated the natures of these illustrious rivals. Of Fox and Pitt he says, under the similitude of the "birdie cocks,"

> "The tane is game, a bluidie devil
> But to the hen-birds unco civil,
> The tither's something dour o' treadin',
> But better stuff ne'er clawed a midden."

Nor will the allusion to the "hand-cuffed, muzzled, hap-shackled Regent" be lost on those who remember the alarm into which the nation was thrown by the King's illness.

ADDRESS

TO

THE TOOTH-ACHE.

My curse upon thy venom'd stang,
That shoots my tortur'd gums alang;
And thro' my lugs gies mony a twang,
Wi' gnawing vengeance:
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
Like racking engines!

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or cholic squeezes;
Our neighbour's sympathy may ease us,
Wi' pitying moan;
But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases,
Ay mocks our groan!

Adown my beard the slavers trickle!
I kick the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle,
To see me loup;
While, raving mad, I wish a heckle
Were in their doup.

O' a' the num'rous human dools,
Ill har'sts, daft bargains, cutty-stools,
Or worthy friends rak'd i' the mools,
Sad sight to see!
The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools,—
Thou bear'st the gree.

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
Whence a' the tones o' mis'ry yell,
And ranked plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw,
Thou, Tooth-ache, surely bear'st the bell
Amang them a'!

O thou grim mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes of discord squeel,
'Till daft mankind âft dance a reel
In gore a shoe-thick!—
Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal
A towmond's Tooth-ache!

The tooth-ache attacked Burns soon after he took up his abode at Ellisland: like other sufferers, he was any thing but patient under it; and his neighbours aver that he spoke truth when he said he—

"Kicked the wee stools owre the mickle."

Some of the verses are in his happiest mood.

ODE,

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

MRS. OSWALD.

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,
Hangman of creation, mark!
Who in widow-weeds appears,
Laden with unhonoured years,
Noosing with care a bursting purse,
Baited with many a deadly curse!

STROPHE.

View the wither'd beldam's face—
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of humanity's sweet melting grace?
Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows,
Pity's flood there never rose.
See these hands, ne'er stretch'd to save,
Hands that took—but never gave.
Keeper of Mammon's iron chest,
Lo, there she goes, unpitied and unblest
She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest!

ANTISTROPE.

Plunderer of armies, lift thine eyes,
(Awhile forbear, ye tort'ring fiends;)
Seest thou whose step, unwilling hither bends?
No fallen angel, hurl'd from upper skies;
'Tis thy trusty quondam mate,
Doom'd to share thy fiery fate,
She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE.

And are they of no more avail,
Ten thousand glitt'ring pounds a-year?
In other words, can Mammon fail,
Omnipotent as he is here?
O, bitter mock'ry of the pompous bier,
While down the wretched vital part is driv'n!
The cave-lodg'd beggar, with a conscience clear,
Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to Heav'n.

The origin of this harsh effusion is thus related by the Poet to Dr. Moore:—"In January last, on my road to Ayrshire, I had to put up at Bailie Whigham's in Sanquhar, the only tolerable inn in the place. The frost was keen, and the grim evening and howling wind were ushering in a night of snow and drift. My horse and I were both much fatigued with the labours of the day; and just as my friend the bailie and I were bidding defiance to the storm, over a smoking bowl, in wheels the funeral pageantry of the late Mrs. Oswald; and poor I am forced to brave all

the terrors of the tempestuous night, and jade my horse—my young favourite horse, whom I had just christened Pegasus, further on through the wildest hills and moors of Ayrshire to the next inn! The 'powers of poetry and prose sunk under me when I would describe what I felt. Suffice it to say, that when a good fire at New Cumnock had so far recovered my frozen sinews, I sat down and wrote the enclosed ode." The Poet lived to think more favourably of the name; one of his finest lyrics, "O wat ye wha's in yon town," was written in honour of the beauty of the succeeding Mrs. Oswald.

It was probably to these verses, as well as to others that Burns alluded in one of his last conversations upon literary subjects.—"He lamented," said Mrs. Riddell, "that he had written many epigrams on persons against whom he entertained no enmity, and whose characters he should be sorry to wound. These, and some unguarded letters and verses, he feared would be handed about by idle vanity or malevolence, when no dread of his resentment would restrain them, or prevent the censures of shrill-tongued malice, or the insidious sarcasms of envy, from pouring forth all their venom to blast his fame."

FRAGMENT

INSCRIBED

TO THE RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX.

How wisdom and folly meet, mix, and unite;
How virtue and vice blend their black and their white;
How genius, th' illustrious father of fiction,
Confounds rule and law, reconciles contradiction—
I sing: if these mortals, the critics, should bustle,
I care not, not I—let the critics go whistle!

But now for a patron, whose name and whose glory
At once may illustrate and honour my story.

Thou first of our orators, first of our wits;
Yet whose parts and acquirements seem mere lucky
hits;
With knowledge so vast, and with judgment so strong,
No man with the half of 'em e'er went far wrong;
With passions so potent, and fancies so bright,
No man with the half of 'em e'er went quite right;—
A sorry, poor misbegot son of the muses,
For using thy name offers fifty excuses.

Good L—d, what is man? for as simple he looks,
Do but try to develope his hooks and his crooks;
With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil,
All in all he's a problem must puzzle the devil.

On his one ruling passion sir Pope hugely labours,
That, like th' old Hebrew walking-switch, eats up its neighhours;
Mankind are his show-box—a friend, would you know him?
Pull the string, ruling passion the picture will shew him.
What pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,
One trifling particular, truth, should have miss'd him;
For, spite of his fine theoretic positions,
Mankind is a science defies definitions.

Some sort all our qualities each to its tribe,
And think human nature they truly describe;
Have you found this, or t'other? there's more in the wind,
As by one drunken fellow his comrades you'll find.
But such is the flaw, or the depth of the plan,
In the make of that wonderful creature, call'd man,
No two virtues, whatever relation they claim,
Nor even two different shades of the same,
Though like as was ever twin brother to brother,
Possessing the one shall imply you've the other.

What the great statesman thought of the lines in which the plebeian bard delineated his character, no one has said. This fragment is one of those many beginnings which Burns made in compliance with the opinions of critics and scholars, that he ought to write a long regular poem.—"I have a poetic whim in my head," he observes to Mrs. Dunlop, "which I at present dedicate or rather inscribe to the Right Hon. Charles James Fox; but how long that fancy may hold, I cannot say. A few of the first lines I have just rough sketched."

The jacobitical inclinations of the Poet's earlier days were now vanishing amid the rumours of wars abroad and party-disputes at home. For some time he appears to have wavered between the factions of Pitt and Fox. In his verses on the American war he seems to admire Pitt; and in his "Dream" he speaks of Fox as a rattler of dice rather than a statesman. As the French Revolution proceeded, these opinions changed: the Tories treated the Poet coldly; the Whigs promised much, when they got into power, and, as hope had been his chief solace in youth, he continued to hope on.

ON SEEING

A WOUNDED HARE

LIMP BY ME,

WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT.

Inhuman man! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye;
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

Go live, poor wanderer of the wood and field!
The bitter little that of life remains:
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Oft as by winding Nith, I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn;
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.

Like most of the productions of Burns, this poem is founded on fact. James Thomson, whose father occupied a farm adjoining to that of Ellisland, told me that once in the gloaming he shot at and hurt a hare, which, like that of Gay, had come forth

"To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn."

Burns was walking on Nithside, the hare ran bleeding by him; "upon which," said Thomson, "he cursed me, and said he would not mind to throw me into the water; and I'll warrant he could hae don't, though I was both young and strong." In his first rough-draught the following fine verse stands between the third and fourth stanzas:—

"Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its woe;
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side;
Ah! helpless nurslings, who will now provide
That life a mother only can bestow?"

It appears that Burns copied out these verses, and laid them before the critical eye of Dr. Gregory. The boor of Nithside hardly used the hare worse than the critic of Edinburgh used the poem:—"The wounded hare is a pretty good subject; but the measure you have chosen for it is not a good one—it does not flow well, and the rhyme of the fourth line is almost lost by its distance from the first. Murder-aiming is a bad compound of shot, and not very intelligible; blood-stained has the same fault: bleeding bosom is infinitely better. You have accustomed yourself to such epithets, and have no notion how stiff and quaint they appear to others, and how incongruous with poetic fancy and tender sentiments."—"Dr. Gregory," said Burns, "is a good man, but he crucifies me: I believe in his iron justice; but, like the devils, I believe and tremble."

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.

Ellisland, 21*st Oct*. 1789.

Wow, but your letter made me vauntie!
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie?
I kenn'd it still your wee bit jauntie,
Wad bring ye to:
Lord send you ay as weel's I want ye,
And then ye'll do.

The ill-thief blaw the Heron south!
And never drink be near his drouth!
He tald mysel by word o' mouth,
He'd tak my letter;
I lippen'd to the chiel in trouth,
And bade nae better.

But aiblins honest Master Heron,
Had at the time some dainty fair one,
To ware his theologic care on,
And holy study;
And tir'd o' sauls to waste his lear on,
E'en tried the body.

But what d'ye think, my trusty fier,
I'm turn'd a gauger—Peace be here!
Parnassian queens, I fear, I fear,
Ye'll now disdain me!
And then my fifty pounds a year
Will little gain me.

Ye glaiket, gleesome, dainty damies,
Wha, by Castalia's wimplin' streamies,
Lowp, sing, and lave your pretty limbies,
Ye ken, ye ken,
That strang necessity supreme is
'Mang sons o'men.

I hae a wife and twa wee laddies,
They maun hae brose and brats o' duddies;
Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is—
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms—thraw saugh woodies,
Before they want.

Lord help me thro' this warld o' care!
I'm weary sick o't late and air!
Not but I hae a richer share
Than mony ithers;
But why should ae man better fare,
And a' men brithers?

Come, firm Resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk o' carl-hemp in man!
And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan
A lady fair:
Wha does the utmost that he can,
Will whyles do mair.

But to conclude my silly rhyme,
(I'm scant o' verse, and scant o' time,)
To make a happy fire-side clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

My compliments to sister Beckie;
And eke the same to honest Lucky,
I wat she is a dainty chuckie,
As e'er tread clay!
And gratefully, my guid auld cockie,
I'm yours for ay.
Robert Burns.

The letter which brought these verses from Burns was in rhyme, and dated from Edinburgh, 24th August, 1789. I subjoin it as a proof of the kindliness of Blacklock's nature, rather than as a sample of his poetry. Some of his strains have elevation and fervour, with occasional touches of tenderness:—

"Dear Burns, thou brother of my heart,
Both for thy virtues and thy art
If art it may be call'd in thee,
Which Nature's bounty large and free,

With pleasure in thy breast diffuses,
And warms thy soul with all the Muses.
Whether to laugh with easy grace,
Thy numbers move the sage's face,
Or bid the softer passions rise,
And ruthless souls with grief surprise,
'Tis Nature's voice distinctly felt,
Thro' thee, her organ, thus to melt.

"Most anxiously I wish to know,
With thee of late how matters go;
How keeps thy much lov'd Jean her health?
What promises thy farm of wealth?
Whether the Muse persists to smile,
And all thy anxious cares beguile?
Whether bright fancy keeps alive?
And how thy darling infants thrive?

"For me, with grief and sickness spent,
Since I my journey homeward bent,
Spirits depress'd no more I mourn,
But vigour, life, and health return.
No more to gloomy thoughts a prey,
I sleep all night, and live all day;
By turns my book and friend enjoy,
And thus my circling hours employ;
Happy while yet these hours remain,
If Burns could join the cheerful train,
With wonted zeal, sincere and fervent,
Salute once more his humble servant,

"THOMAS BLACKLOCK."

The Heron of whom such unceremonious mention is made in the epistle of Burns, was the author of a history of Scotland; and, what is to be regretted, of a Life of the Poet, written in a depreciating spirit, and, it is said, with the memory of these verses upon him. His memoir made its appearance at the very time the public subscription was opened for the Poet's widow and helpless children, and, beyond question, did much harm to the family. This was deeply felt by even very rude people; when Heron himself sought shelter in London, and died of want, as too many die, an old husbandman said, "What better could come of him who harmed the widow and the fatherless!"

DELIA.

AN ODE.

Fair the face of orient day,
Fair the tints of op'ning rose,
But fairer still my Delia dawns,
More lovely far her beauty blows.

Sweet the lark's wild-warbled lay,
Sweet the tinkling rill to hear;
But, Delia, more delightful still
Steal thine accents on mine ear.

The flower-enamoured busy bee
The rosy banquet loves to sip;
Sweet the streamlet's limpid lapse
To the sun-brown'd Arab's lip;—

But, Delia, on thy balmy lips
Let me, no vagrant insect, rove!
O, let me steal one liquid kiss!
For, oh! my soul is parched with love.

Tradition imputes the following origin to this ode :—One day when the Poet was at Brownhill, in Nithsdale, a friend read some verses composed after the pattern of Pope's song by a person of quality, and said, "Burns, this is beyond you; the muse of Kyle cannot match the muse of London City." The Poet took the paper, hummed the verses over for a minute or two, and then recited, "Delia, an Ode." I have some suspicion, nevertheless, that the verses are not by Burns.

The inn of Brownhill, in the parish of Closeburn, was a favourite resting-place for Burns. Dalgarnock, where the heroine of one of his songs went on a tryste, forms part of the parish, and its old burial-ground has since become famous as the place where Old Mortality employed his chisel: Creehope-Linn, too, where the Cameronians sought shelter, is in the neighbourhood; moreover, the landlord, Mr. Bacon, was a well-informed and very facetious person—loved a dram and a joke, and had the art of making his presence acceptable to very polite visiters. The diamond of the Poet had not been idle on the windows; but accident and curiosity have now removed all marks of his hand.

TO JOHN M'MURDO, ESQ.

O, could I give thee India's wealth
As I this trifle send!
Because thy joy in both would be
To share them with a friend.

But golden sands did never grace
The Heliconian stream;
Then take what gold could never buy-
An honest Bard's esteem.

John M'Murdo, Esq., steward to the Duke of Queensberry, was the faithful friend of Burns during the whole period of his residence in Nithsdale. At his fireside he enjoyed many happy hours; nor was his muse silent. The daughters of his friend were beautiful and accomplished, and inspired some exquisite lyrics. These verses accompanied a present of books or verse. Afterwards, when on a visit, he took out a diamond, and wrote the following lines on a pane of glass :—

"Blest be M'Murdo to his latest day!
No envious cloud o'ercast his evening ray;
No wrinkle furrowed by the hand of care,
Nor ever sorrow add one silver hair!
O, may no son the father's honour stain,
Nor ever daughter give the mother pain!"

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE, DUMFRIES, ON NEW YEAR'S-DAY EVENING.

No song nor dance I bring from yon great city
That queen's it o'er our taste—the more's the pity :
Tho', by-the-by, abroad why will you roam ?
Good sense and taste are natives here at home :
But not for panegyric I appear,
I come to wish you all a good new year !
Old Father Time deputes me here before ye,
Not for to preach, but tell his simple story :
The sage grave ancient cough'd, and bade me say,
" You're one year older this important day."
If wiser, too—he hinted some suggestion,
But 'twould be rude, you know, to ask the question ;
And with a would-be roguish leer and wink,
He bade me on you press this one word—" think !"

Ye sprightly youths, quite flushed with hope and
spirit,
Who think to storm the world by dint of merit,
To you the dotard has a deal to say,
In his sly, dry, sententious, proverb way ;

He bids you mind, amid your thoughtless rattle,
That the first blow is ever half the battle;
That tho' some by the skirt may try to snatch him,
Yet by the forelock is the hold to catch him;
That whether doing, suffering, or forbearing,
You may do miracles by persevering.

Last, tho' not least in love, ye youthful fair,
Angelic forms, high Heaven's peculiar care!
To you old Bald-pate smooths his wrinkled brow,
And humbly begs you'll mind the important NOW!
To crown your happiness he asks your leave,
And offers bliss to give and to receive.

For our sincere, tho' haply weak endeavours,
With grateful pride we own your many favours;
And howsoe'er our tongues may ill reveal it,
Believe our glowing bosoms truly feel it.

It has been related in the Life of Burns that he turned his thoughts on the drama, and even went so far as to select a subject, and compose some verses. To enable him to give a proper effect to his musings, he visited sometimes, even while he lived at Ellisland, the Dumfries theatre, and appeared to take pleasure in the performances. We know not, however, that he went so far as to lay down a regular plot, arrange the characters, and distribute the actions to be performed in his drama. His time was much occupied in the distracting duties of

the Excise, and the contest had commenced abroad that was soon to be felt through all the cottages of Scotland, and which promised more than it performed for the happiness of mankind. Burns was too fervent of nature not to think and speak on the subject: arguing about liberty and equality with hot-tempered and impetuous people was any thing but favourable for a work which, whether composed for a Scottish or English audience, required repose and abstraction: no wonder, therefore, that his drama stood still.—"Those who recollect," says Scott, "the masculine and lofty tone of martial spirit which glows in the poem of Bannockburn, will sigh to think what the character of the gallant Bruce might have proved under the hand of Burns."

On the 11th of January, 1790, he thus writes to his brother Gilbert: "We have gotten a set of very decent players here just now: I have seen them an evening or two. David Campbell, in Ayr, wrote to me by the manager of the company, a Mr. Sutherland, who is a man of apparent worth. On New-year's-day I gave him the following prologue, which he spouted to his audience with applause." Of this manager the Poet lived to say something more, and in verse, too. The theatre of Dumfries is small and neat, and there is not a little taste for the drama among the people of the vale of Nith.

SCOTS PROLOGUE,

FOR MR. SUTHERLAND'S BENEFIT NIGHT,

DUMFRIES.

WHAT needs this din about the town o' Lon'on,
How this new play an' that new sang is comin'?
Why is outlandish stuff sae meikle courted?
Does nonsense mend like whiskey, when imported?
Is there nae poet, burning keen for fame,
Will try to gie us songs and plays at hame?
For comedy abroad he need nae toil,
A fool and knave are plants of every soil;
Nor need he hunt as far as Rome and Greece
To gather matter for a serious piece;
There's themes enough in Caledonian story,
Would shew the tragic muse in a' her glory.—

Is there no daring bard will rise, and tell
How glorious Wallace stood, how hapless fell?
Where are the muses fled that could produce
A drama worthy o' the name o' Bruce;
How here, even here, he first unsheath'd the sword,
'Gainst mighty England and her guilty lord;

And after mony a bloody, deathless doing,
Wrench'd his dear country from the jaws of ruin?
O for a Shakspeare or an Otway scene,
To draw the lovely, hapless Scottish Queen!
Vain all th' omnipotence of female charms
'Gainst headlong, ruthless, mad Rebellion's arms.
She fell, but fell with spirit truly Roman,
To glut the vengeance of a rival woman:
A woman—tho' the phrase may seem uncivil—
As able and as cruel as the Devil!
One Douglas lives in Home's immortal page,
But Douglases were heroes every age:
And tho' your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas followed to the martial strife,
Perhaps if bowls row right, and Right succeeds,
Ye yet may follow where a Douglas leads!

As ye hae generous done, if a' the land
Would take the muses' servants by the hand;
Not only hear, but patronize, befriend them,
And where ye justly can commend, commend them;
And aiblins when they winna stand the test,
Wink hard and say the folks hae done their best!
Would a' the land do this, then I'll be caution
Ye'll soon hae poets o' the Scottish nation,
Will gar fame blaw until her trumpet crack,
And warsle time, an' lay him on his back!

For us and for our stage should ony spier,
"Whase aught thae chiels maks a' this bustle here?"
My best leg foremost, I'll set up my brow,
We have the honour to belong to you!
We're your ain bairns, e'en guide us as ye like,
But like good mithers, shore before ye strike.—
And gratefu' still I hope ye'll ever find us.
For a' the patronage and meikle kindness
We've got frae a' professions, sets and ranks:
God help us! we're but poor—ye'se get but thanks.

To task the muse is dangerous, and this prologue was a task: Burns produced some vigorous lines, but on the whole it is not equal to many other of even his hurried compositions. The themes which he points out for the tragic muse are noble ones:—but the heroic Wallace and the beauteous Mary would require sentiment and pathos such as are rare in the modern drama. James Grahame, the author of the Sabbath, and Thomas Doubleday, of Newcastle, have composed dramas on the subject of Queen Mary, and both have produced scenes which cannot be perused without emotion. Scott, too, has thrown the charms of his genius around a life already sufficiently romantic. The words which Grahame ascribes to Mary when she looks from England towards her native land, are touching:—

MARY.—O England! England! grave of murdered princes!
Why did I leave thee, Scotland, dearest land?
In thee I had some friends—they died for me:
O were I on the side of yon dim mountain!
Though wild and bleak it be, it is in Scotland.
ADELAIDE.—Alas! 'tis but a cloud.

MARY.—No! 'tis a mountain of sweet Annerdale.
ADELAIDE.—Ah, no! 'tis but a cloud; you know our distance.
MARY.—Well, then, it is a cloud that hovers o'er
My dear, my native land: I love that cloud,
That misty robe of spirits. O, Adelaide,
Come soothe me with that mournful song——
'Tis an old thing; we heard it in the days
Of happiness, and yet it filled our eyes
With tears: we heard it in the vale of Morven:
'Twas something .'Twas about the voice of Cona.
ADELAIDE.—The maiden with the distaff by the stream
'Twas she that sung it.
I do remember—and after she had sung it
She tried to tell it o'er in broken Scottish.
MARY.—Let me hear it.
ADELAIDE.—I feel my heart so full that but one note,
A single note, sung even by myself
Would quite untune my voice.
MARY.—The weary rook hies home—my home's a prison,
All things are free but me. Why did I leave
Lochleven's beauteous isle? There I could range
Along the shore, or, seated on the bank,
Hope still for better days."

The muse of Schiller, too, threw a halo round her name in a foreign land. Mary's woes still await some future Shakspeare, or pathetic Otway.

SKETCH.

NEW YEAR'S-DAY.

TO MRS. DUNLOP.

This day, Time winds th' exhausted chain,
To run the twelvemonth's length again:
I see the old, bald-pated fellow,
With ardent eyes, complexion sallow,
Adjust the unimpair'd machine,
To wheel the equal, dull routine.

The absent lover, minor heir,
In vain assail him with their prayer;
Deaf as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's with the hounds,
The happy tenants share his rounds;
Coila's fair Rachel's care to-day,
And blooming Keith's engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow—
—That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow—
And join with me a moralizing,
This day's propitious to be wise in.

First, what did yesternight deliver?
"Another year is gone for ever."
And what is this day's strong suggestion?
"The passing moment's all we rest on!"
Rest on—for what? what do we here?
Or why regard the passing year?
Will time, amus'd with proverb'd lore,
Add to our date one minute more?
A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust.
Then is it wise to damp our bliss?
Yes—all such reasonings are amiss!
The voice of nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies:
That on this frail, uncertain state,
Hang matters of eternal weight:
That future life in worlds unknown
Must take its hue from this alone;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as misery's woeful night.—
Since then, my honor'd, first of friends,
On this poor being all depends,
Let us th' important *now* employ,
And live as those who never die.—
Tho' you, with days and honours crown'd,
Witness that filial circle round,

(A sight, life's sorrows to repulse,
A sight, pale envy to convulse,)
Others now claim your chief regard ;
Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

The picture contained in this sketch of the fireside of Mrs. Dunlop is equally true and beautiful. That lady herself had not only a fine taste for poetry, but she wrote verses elegant and flowing: her son, the late General Dunlop, exhibited all the courage of his house,

"Few better were or braver;"

and it has been remarked that, for fiery and persevering impetuosity of attack, few officers equalled him. Her daughter Rachel, whose skill in drawing was considerable, employed her pencil, I knew not with what success, on the Coila of the Vision. To this Burns refers in one of his letters :—" I am highly flattered by the news you tell me of Coila. I may say to the fair painter who does me so much honour, as Dr. Beattie says to Ross the poet, of his muse Scota—from which, by-the-by, I took the idea of Coila—

'Ye shake your head, but by my fegs,
Ye've set auld Scota on her legs ;
Lang had she lien wi' beffs an' flegs,
Bum bazed and dizzie ;
Her fiddle wanted strings and pegs,
Waes me, poor hizzie!' "

The Scota of Ross, described by Burns as the forerunner of Coila, figures in the Invocation to " The Fortunate Shepherdess." Some of the lines are pleasing :

" Come Scota ! thou that anes upon a day,
Gar'd Allan Ramsay's hungry heart-strings play
The merriest sangs that ever yet were sung,
Pity anes mair, for I'm outthrow as clung.

'Tis may be better, I'll tak fat ye gee,
Ye're nae toom-handed, gin yere heart be free;
But I'll be willing, gin ye bid me write,
Blind horse, they say, ride hardly to the fight:
And by gude hap may come again, but scorn—
They are no kempers a' that shear the corn."
Then Scota heard and said "Your rough spun ware
Sounds but right doust and fowsome to my ear:—
Do ye pretend to write like my ain bairn,
Or onie ane that wins beyont the Kairn?
Ye're far mista'en gin ye think sic a thought,
The Gentle Shepherd's nae sae easy wrought:
There's scenes and acts, there's drift and there's design,
And a' maun like a new-ground whittle shine,
Sic wimpled wark would crack a pow like thine."
"Kind Mistress," says I, "gin this be your fear,
Charge nae mair shot than what the piece'll bear."
"Gae then," she says, "nor deave me wi' your din,
Puff—I inspire you, sae you may begin.
Speak my ain leed—'tis gueed auld Scots I mean,
Your southern gnaps I count not worth a preen:
We've words a fouth that we can ca' our ain,
Though frae them now my childer sair refrain;
Gin this ye do, and line your rhyme wi' sense,
But ye'll mak' friends o' fremmet fowk, fa kens."

These are homely verses, yet they are felt in the romantic vales of Angus:—and Ross "a wild warlock," as Burns somewhere calls him, is likely to keep the approbation which he coveted—that of his native county.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

WAS WRITTEN

TO A GENTLEMAN WHO HAD SENT HIM A NEWSPAPER, AND OFFERED TO CONTINUE IT FREE OF EXPENSE.

KIND Sir, I've read your paper through,
And, faith, to me 'twas really new!
How guessed ye, Sir, what maist I wanted?
This mony a day I've grain'd and gaunted,
To ken what French mischief was brewin';
Or what the drumlie Dutch were doin';
That vile doup-skelper, Emperor Joseph,
If Venus yet had got his nose off;
Or how the collieshangie works
Atween the Russians and the Turks;
Or if the Swede, before he halt,
Would play anither Charles the Twalt:
If Denmark, any body spak o't;
Or Poland, wha had now the tack o't;
How cut-throat Prussian blades were hingin';
How libbet Italy was singin';
If Spaniard, Portuguese, or Swiss
Were sayin' or takin' aught amiss:

Or how our merry lads at hame,
In Britain's court kept up the game:
How royal George, the Lord leuk o'er him!
Was managing St. Stephen's quorum;
If sleekit Chatham Will was livin',
Or glaikit Charlie got his nieve in;
How daddie Burke the plea was cookin',
If Warren Hastings' neck was yeukin;
How cesses, stents, and fees were rax'd,
Or if bare a—s yet were tax'd;
The news o' princes, dukes, and earls,
Pimps, sharpers, bawds, and opera girls;
If that daft buckie, Geordie Wales,
Was threshin still at hizzies' tails;
Or if he was grown oughtlins douser,
And no a perfect kintra cooser.—
A' this and mair I never heard of;
And but for you I might despair'd of.
So gratefu', back your news I send you,
And pray, a' guid things may attend you!

Ellisland, Monday morning, 1790.

The Poet was unwilling to lay himself under obligations, and to soften the refusal of accepting a newspaper free of expense, he declined it in rhyme. He, however, took the opportunity of making a hasty summary of im-

portant matters, on which even a solitary newspaper had thrown light, and this he has done with both knowledge and humour. We know now—to the shame of Europe be it said—who has the "tack of Poland;" and we know, too, that the march of the Swede resembled any thing but that of "Charles the Twalt." We also know that Warren Hastings triumphed over the eloquence of his opponents, and is now looked upon by many as a sort of martyr in the cause of our empire in the East. The favourable change which took place respecting him in public opinion, I have heard ascribed to a pamphlet written by Logan, the minister of Leith.

The modesty of the court of George the Third, and the licence of that of the Prince of Wales, formed a strange contrast: Burns was not solitary in his sarcastic strictures on the wild course of life pursued by some of the young princes. His sallies are not at all ill-natured, nor is he unwilling to believe that the folly of youth will sober down into sedateness and wisdom. The satires of Wolcot on the King were vulgar, nor remarkable for talent: those ascribed to Moore on the court of the Fourth George are sharp and severe, and distinguished by their sprightliness and wit.

THE KIRKS ALARM.

A BALLAD.

[SECOND VERSION.]

I.

Orthodox, orthodox,
Who believe in John Knox,
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience-
There's a heretic blast,
Has been blawn i' the wast,
That what is not sense must be nonsense.
Orthodox,
That what is not sense must be nonsense,

II.

Doctor Mac, Doctor Mac,
Ye should stretch on a rack,
To strike evil doers wi' terror ;
To join faith and sense,
Upon any pretence,
Was heretic damnable error,
Doctor Mac,
Was heretic damnable error.

III.

Town of Ayr, town of Ayr,
It was rash I declare,
To meddle wi' mischief a brewing;
Provost John is still deaf
To the church's relief,
And orator Bob is it's ruin,
Town of Ayr,
And orator Bob is its ruin.

IV.

D'rymple mild, D'rymple mild,
Tho' your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new driven snaw,
Yet that winna save ye,
Old Satan must have ye
For preaching that three's ane an' twa,
D'rymple mild,
For preaching that three's ane an' twa.

V.

Calvin's sons, Calvin's sons,
Seize your spiritual guns,
Ammunition ye never can need;
Your hearts are the stuff,
Will be powder enough,
And your sculls are a storehouse of lead,
Calvin's sons,
And your sculls are a storehouse of lead.

VI.

Rumble John, Rumble John,
Mount the steps with a groan,
Cry the book is with heresy cramm'd;
Then lug out your ladle,
Deal brimstone like aidle,
And roar every note o' the damn'd,
Rumble John,
And roar every note o' the damn'd.

VII.

Simper James, Simper James,
Leave the fair Killie dames,
There's a holier chase in your view;
I'll lay on your head,
That the pack ye'll soon lead,
For puppies like you there's but few,
Simper James,
For puppies like you there's but few.

VIII.

Singet Sawnie, Singet Sawnie,
Are ye herding the penny,
Unconscious what danger awaits?
With a jump, yell, and howl,
Alarm every soul,
For Hannibal's just at your gates,
Singet Sawnie,
For Hannibal's just at your gates.

IX.

Andrew Gowk, Andrew Gowk,
Ye may slander the book,
And the book nought the waur—let me tell you;
Tho' ye're rich and look big,
Yet lay by hat and wig,
And ye'll hae a calf's-head o' sma' value,
Andrew Gowk,
And ye'll hae a calf's-head o' sma' value.

X.

Poet Willie, Poet Willie,
Gie the doctor a volley,
Wi' your "liberty's chain" and your wit;
O'er Pegasus' side,
Ye ne'er laid a stride,
Ye only stood by when he sh——,
Poet Willie,
Ye only stood by when he sh——.

XI.

Barr Steenie, Barr Steenie
What mean ye? what mean ye?
If ye'll meddle nae mair wi' the matter,
Ye may hae some pretence man,
To havins and sense man,
Wi' people that ken you nae better,
Barr Steenie,
Wi people that ken you nae better.

XII.

Jamie Goose, Jamie Goose,
Ye hae made but toom roose,
O' hunting the wicked lieutenant;
But the doctor's your mark,
For the L—d's holy ark,
He has cooper'd and ca'd a wrong pin in't,
Jamie Goose,
He has cooper'd and ca'd a wrong pin in't.

XIII.

Davie Bluster, Davie Bluster,
For a saunt if ye muster,
It's a sign they're no nice o' recruits,
Yet to worth let's be just,
Royal blood ye might boast,
If the ass were the king o' the brutes,
Davie Bluster,
If the ass were the king o' the brutes.

XIV.

Muirland George, Muirland George,
Whom the Lord made a scourge,
To claw common sense for her sins;
If ill manners were wit,
There's no mortal so fit,
To confound the poor doctor at ance.
Muirland George,
To confound the poor doctor at ance.

XV.

Cessnockside, Cessnockside,
Wi' your turkey-cock pride,
O' manhood but sma' is your share ;
Ye've the figure, it's true,
Even our faes maun allow,
And your friends daurna say ye hae mair,
Cessnockside,
And your friends daurna say ye hae mair.

XVI.

Daddie Auld, Daddie Auld,
There's a tod i' the fauld,
A tod meikle waur than the clerk ;
Tho' ye downa do skaith,
Ye'll be in at the death,
And if ye canna bite ye can bark,
Daddie Auld,
And if ye canna bite ye can bark.

XVII.

Poet Burns, Poet Burns,
Wi' your priest-skelping turns,
Why desert ye your auld native shire ?
Tho' your Muse is a gipsy,
Yet were she even tipsy,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are,
Poet Burns,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

POSTSCRIPT.

Afton's Laird, Afton's Laird,
When your pen can be spar'd,
A copy o' this I bequeath,
On the same sicker score
I mentioned before,
To that trusty auld worthy Clackleith,
Afton's Laird,
To that trusty auld worthy Clackleith.

Among the west country friends of Burns, John Logan Esq. of Afton was conspicuous, and a regular correspondence was maintained between them for a number of years. Of all the letters of the Poet, the hunters after reliques or the admirers of his handwriting have allowed none to remain in the family save following, which the kindness of Miss Logan enables give along with the second version of "The Kirk's Alarm," which it at once enclosed and illustrated.

"*Ellisland, near Dumfries, 7th Aug.*, 1789.

"DEAR SIR,—I intended to have written you long ere now, and as I told you I had gotten three stanzas and a half on my way in a poetic epistle to you; but that old enemy of all *good works*, the devil, threw me into a prosaic mire, and for the soul of me I cannot get out of it. I dare not write you a long letter, as I am going to intrude on your time with a long ballad.

have, as you will shortly see, finished 'The Kirk's arm;' but now that it is done, and that I have laughed once or twice at the conceits in some of the stanzas, I am determined not to let it get into the public; so I send you this copy, the first that I have sent to Ayrshire, except some few of the stanzas, which I wrote off in embryo for Gavin Hamilton, under the express provision and request that you will only read it to a few of us, and do not on any account give, or permit to be taken, any copy of the ballad. If I could be of any service to Dr. M'Gill, I would do it, though it should be at a much greater expense than irritating a few bigoted priests, but I am afraid serving him in his present embarras is a task too hard for me. I have enemies enow, God knows, though I do not wantonly add to the number. Still, as I think there is some merit in two or three of the thoughts, I send it to you as a small, but sincere testimony how much, and with what respectful esteem,

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your obliged humble Servant,

"ROBERT BURNS."

Those who are curious in poetic variations may compare the present version with the other, given in the second volume: I have not repeated the notes, but printed it as it came from Burns' pen. The tune to which he adapted it is called "Push about the brisk bowl." He thus introduces it to Graham of Fintray:—"Though I dare say you have none of the Solemn League and Covenant fire which shone so conspicuous in Lord George Gordon and the Kilmarnock weavers, yet I think you must have heard of Dr. M'Gill, one of the clergymen of Ayr, and his heretical book. God help

him, poor man! Though he is one of the worthiest, as well as one of the ablest of the whole priesthood of the Kirk of Scotland, in every sense of that ambiguous term, yet the poor Doctor and his numerous family are in imminent danger of being thrown out (9th December, 1790) to the mercy of the winter winds. The enclosed ballad on that business is, I confess, too local; but I laughed myself at some conceits in it, though I am convinced in my conscience that there are a good many heavy stanzas in it, too."

To another correspondent the Poet says:—"Whether in the way of my trade I can be of any service to the Rev. Doctor is, I fear, very doubtful. Ajax' shield consisted, I think, of seven bull-hides and a plate of brass, which altogether set Hector's utmost force at defiance. Alas! I am not a Hector, and the worthy Doctor's foes are as securely armed as Ajax was. Ignorance, superstition, bigotry, stupidity, malevolence, self-conceit, envy—all strongly bound in a massy frame of brazen impudence."

PEG NICHOLSON.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
As ever trode on airn ;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
And past the mouth o' Cairn.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And rode thro' thick and thin ;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
And wanting even the skin.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And ance she bore a priest ;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
For Solway fish a feast.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And the priest he rode her sair ;
And much oppressed and bruised she was ;
As priest-rid cattle are, &c. &c.

Peg Nicholson was the successor of Jenny Geddes: the latter took her name from the zealous dame who threw a stool at the Dean of Edinburgh's head, when the ritual of the Episcopal Church was introduced: and the former acquired the name of Peg Nicholson from that frantic virago who attempted the life of George III. Of the exit of Mrs. Margaret, the Poet gives an account to Willam Nicol, who had sold or rather lent her to the Poet.

"SIR,—That d-mn'd mare of your's is dead.—I would freely have given her price to have saved her: she has vexed me beyond description.—Indebted as I was to your goodness beyond what I can ever repay, I eagerly grasped at your offer to leave the mare with me, that I might at least shew my readiness in wishing to be grateful; I took every care of her in my power; she was never crossed for riding above half a score of times by me or in my keeping; I drew her in the plough, one of three, for one poor week; I refused fifty-five shillings for her, which was the highest bode I could squeeze for her; I fed her up and had her in fine order for Dumfries fair; when, four or five days before the fair, she was seized with an unaccountable disorder in the sinews or somewhere in the bones of her neck, with a weakness or total want of power in her fillets, and, in short, the whole vertebræ of her spine seemed to be diseased and unhinged; and in eight and forty hours, in spite of the two best farriers in the country, she died and be d-mn'd to her. The farriers said that she had been quite strained in the fillets before you had bought her, and that the poor devil, though she might keep a little flesh, had been jaded and quite worn out with fatigue and oppression. While she was with me, she was under my own eye, and I assure you, my much valued friend, every

thing was done for her that could be done, and the accident has vexed me to the heart. In fact, I could not pluck up spirits to write to you, on account of the unfortunate business."

One of the men of skill whom Burns brought to the aid of Peg Nicholson was the eccentric Samuel Colan; a person eminently skilful in the ailments of four-footed creatures, but who believed that all diseases among cattle or horses proceeded from witchcraft or the malice of elves and fairies. The swelling of a cow from eating dewy clover was caused, he said, by a spell: pains in the limbs arose he was certain from elf-arrows, and with regard to witches, he declared that the Cauldside of Dunscore was swarming with them. "I can stand," said he, "on my threshold and count aught—HIS presence be near us!" Little was to be hoped from honest Samuel's skill if his employer chanced to smile as he laid down the rustic law regarding murrain, mooril, and other ailments.

ON

CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON,

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS HONOURS IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

"Should the poor be flattered?"
SHAKSPEARE.

But now his radiant course is run,
For Matthew's course was bright;
His soul was like the glorious sun,
A matchless heav'nly light!

O Death! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meikle devil wi' a woodie
Haurl thee hame to his black smiddie,
O'er hurcheon hides,
And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie
Wi' thy auld sides!

He's gane! he's gane! he's frae us torn,
The ae best fellow e'er was born!
Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel' shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exil'd!

Ye hills! near neebors o' the starns,
That proudly cock your cresting cairns!
Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing yearns,
Where echo slumbers!
Come join, ye Nature's sturdiest bairns,
My wailing numbers!

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat kens!
Ye haz'lly shaws and briery dens!
Ye burnies, wimplin' down your glens,
Wi' toddlin din,
Or foaming strang, wi' hasty stens,
Frae lin to lin!

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea;
Ye stately foxgloves fair to see;
Ye woodbines, hanging bonnilie,
In scented bow'rs,
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first o' flow'rs.

At dawn, when ev'ry grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at its head,
At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed,
I' th' rustling gale,
Ye maukins whiddin thro' the glade,
Come join my wail.

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud;
Ye curlews calling thro' a clud;
Ye whistling plover;
An' mourn ye whirring paitrick brood!—
He's gane for ever!

Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals;
Ye fisher herons, watching eels;
Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
Circling the lake;
Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
Rair for his sake.

Mourn, clam'ring craiks at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flow'ring clover gay;
And when ye wing your annual way
Frae our cauld shore,
Tell thae far warlds, wha lies in clay,
Wham we deplore.

Ye houlets, frae your ivy bow'r,
In some auld tree, or eldritch tow'r,
What time the moon, wi' silent glowr,
Sets up her horn,
Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour
'Till waukrife morn!

O, rivers, forests, hills, and plains!
Oft have ye heard my canty strains:
But now, what else for me remains
But tales of woe?
And frae my een the drapping rains
Maun ever flow.

Mourn, spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear:
Thou, simmer, while each corny spear
Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flow'ry tresses shear
For him that's dead!

Thou, autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear!
Thou, winter, hurling thro' the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost!

Mourn him, thou sun, great source of light!
Mourn, empress of the silent night!
And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
My Matthew mourn!
For through your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
Ne'er to return.

O, Henderson! the man—the brother!
And art thou gone, and gone for ever?
And hast thou crost that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound?
Like thee, where shall I find another,
The world around?

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state!
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth!
And weep the ae best fellow's fate
E'er lay in earth.

THE EPITAPH.

Stop, passenger!—my story's brief,
And truth I shall relate, man;
I tell nae common tale o' grief—
For Matthew was a great man.

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurn'd at fortune's door, man,
A look of pity hither cast—
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man,
There moulders here a gallant heart—
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man,
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise-
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou at friendship's sacred ca'
Wad life itself resign, man,
Thy sympathetic tear maun fa'—
For Matthew was a kind man!

If thou art staunch without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man,
This was a kinsman o' thy ain—
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er guid wine did fear, man,
This was thy billie, dam, and sire—
For Matthew was a queer man.

If ony whiggish whingin sot,
To blame poor Matthew dare, man,
May dool and sorrow be his lot!
For Matthew was a rare man.

The note to this exquisite elegy would have been brief had I not obtained from Mrs. M'Murdo the original poem in the Poet's hand-writing, which not only supplies some interesting variations, but is accompanied by the following characteristic note :—" Now that you are over with

the sirens of flattery, the harpies of corruption, and the furies of ambition—those infernal deities that, on all sides and in all parties, preside over the villainous business of politics—permit a rustic muse of your acquaintance to do her best to soothe you with a song. You knew Henderson? I have not flattered his memory." Some of the variations are instructive: when Burns altered, it was for the better: every change brought an increase of propriety. Compare the second verse with the following:—

> "He's gane, he's gane! he's frae us torn!
> The ae best fellow e'er was born;
> Thee, Matthew, woods and wilds shall mourn
> With a' their birth;
> For whunstane man to grieve wou'd scorn,
> For poor plain worth."

On comparing this copy with another belonging to Miss Stewart of Afton, I find changes such as the following:—

> "And mourn ye birring (whirring) paitrick-brood,
> He's gane for ever."

In another verse this variation occurs:—

> "Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
> Rowte (rair) for his sake."

Nor has the Poet been less happy in other emendations; for instance:—

> "In some au'd tree or aulder (eldritch) tower."

And again, instead of the printed line in the Epitaph,

> "This was thy billie, dam, and sire,"

I find the following, which jars with the sentiment with which it is associated:—

> "These bones a mother's tears require."

In both the manuscript copies, the motto beginning—

> "But now his radiant course is run,"

formed the last verse of the Epitaph, and closed the subject very beautifully.

THE FIVE CARLINS.

A SCOTS BALLAD.

Tune—*Chevy-Chase.*

There were five carlins in the south,
  They fell upon a scheme,
To send a lad to London town,
  To bring them tidings hame.

Not only bring them tidings hame,
  But do their errands there ;
And aiblins gowd and honour baith
  Might be that laddie's share.

There was Maggy by the banks o' Nith,
  A dame wi' pride eneugh ;
And Marjory o' the mony lochs,
  A carlin auld and teugh.

And blinkin' Bess of Annandale,
  That dwelt near Solway-side ;
And whiskey Jean, that took her gill
  In Galloway sae wide.

And black Joan, frae Crighton-peel,
O' gipsy kith an' kin ;—
Five wighter carlins were na found
The south countrie within.

To send a lad to London town,
They met upon a day ;
And mony a knight, and mony a laird,
This errand fain wad gae.

O mony a knight, and mony a laird,
This errand fain wad gae ;
But nae ane could their fancy please,
O ne'er a ane but twae.

The first ane was a belted knight,
Bred of a border-band ;
And he wad gae to London town,
Might nae man him withstand.

And he wad do their errands weel,
And meikle he wad say ;
And ilka ane about the court
Wad bid to him gude-day.

The neist cam in a sodger youth,
And spak wi' modest grace,
And he wad gae to London town,
If sae their pleasure was.

He wad na hecht them courtly gifts,
  Nor meikle speech pretend;
But he wad hecht an honest heart,
  Wad ne'er desert his friend.

Then wham to chuse, and wham refuse,
  At strife thir carlins fell;
For some had gentlefolks to please,
  And some wad please themsel.

Then out spak mim-mou'd Meg o' Nith,
  And she spak up wi' pride,
And she wad send the sodger youth,
  Whatever might betide.

For the auld gudeman o' London court
  She didna care a pin;
But she wad send the sodger youth
  To greet his eldest son.

Then slow raise Marjory o' the Lochs
  And wrinkled was her brow;
Her ancient weed was russet gray,
  Her auld Scot's heart was true.

"The London court set light by me—
  I set as light by them;
And I will send the sodger lad
  To shaw that court the same."

Then up sprang Bess of Annandale
  And swore a deadly aith,
Says, "I will send the border-knight
  Spite o' you carlins baith.

"For far-off fowls hae feathers fair,
  And fools o' change are fain;
But I hae try'd this border-knight,
  I'll try him yet again."

Then whiskey Jean spak o'er her drink,
  "Ye weel ken, kimmers a',
The auld gudeman o' London court,
  His back's been at the wa'.

"And mony a friend that kiss'd his caup,
  Is now a fremit wight;
But it's ne'er be sae wi' whiskey Jean,—
  We'll send the border-knight."

Says black Joan o' Crighton-peel
  A carlin stoor and grim,—
"The auld gudeman, or the young gudeman,
  For me may sink or swim.

"For fools will prate o' right and wrang,
  While knaves laugh in their sleeve;
But wha blaws best the horn shall win,
  I'll speir nae courtier's leave."

So how this mighty plea may end
There's naebody can tell:
God grant the king, and ilka man,
May look weel to himsel'!

"The Five Carlins" are the five boroughs of Dumfrieshire and Kirkcudbright which unite in sending a member to Parliament. The personifications are considered happy by all who are acquainted with the places.

"Maggy by the banks of Nith,
A dame wi' pride eneugh,"

is "bonnie Dumfries," as the Duchess of Gordon delighted to call it, nor is the name forgotten yet by some of her grace's daughters. It is a beautiful town: the seventh of Scotland in point of population, says Chambers, and the fifth for looks.

"Marjory o' the mony lochs,
A carlin auld and teugh,"

is Lochmaben; a neat little borough, altogether secluded from commerce of any kind, and bearing marks of great antiquity. It was the residence of Robert Bruce, the great restorer of Scottish independence: and no one can say but that the king shewed a taste suited to the times, for the castle in which he lived stands all but inaccessible among deep lakes, and every approach by land is commanded.

"Blinkin' Bess, of Annandale,
That dwelt near Solway side,"

personates the little thriving borough of Annan.

"Whiskey Jean, that took her gill
In Galloway sae wide,"

represents the borough of Kirkcudbright; a town of old standing; neat, clean, and prosperous; the country around is picturesque, and old ruins add an aspect of grandeur to the whole.

"Black Joan frae Crighton-Peel,
O' gipsy kith and kin,"

stands for Sanquhar, noted for its fine coals, its carpet-manufactory, and likewise for that species of comfortable stockings called Sanquhar hose: its castle had the honour of a siege from Edward I. in person, and endured an English garrison, from whom it was wrested by stratagem.

The duty which these five ladies met in Dumfries to perform was to decide whether Patrick Miller, younger, of Dalswinton, or Sir James Johnston of Westerhall, should be preferred as their representative in the House of Commons. On the side of the former all the Whig interest of the Duke of Queensberry was mustered: and on that of the latter all the interest which the Tories could command among the Hopes, the Jardines, and the Johnstons. The contest was fierce and acrimonious, and on the part of the "following" threatened blows if not blood. The young, active men of Nithsdale, Annandale, and Eskdale, together with the youth of Galloway, marched into Dumfries, all armed with oak sticks, which in those days they were taught how to use in case of a fray; and had not prudent and sensible men on both sides interposed and directed their eyes and minds elsewhere, confusion and strife would have ensued.

The election was at the hottest, when Burns wrote the "Five Carlins:" he sent a copy of it to Mr. Graham of Fintray, saying, "The election ballad, as you will see,

alludes to the present canvass in our string of boroughs. I do not believe there will be such a hard-run match in the whole general election. Sir James Johnston does what man can do, but yet he doubts his fate." The poem is printed from a copy in the Poet's own handwriting, presented to me on a late visit to Dumfrieshire.

A copy of the ballad, which the Poet sent to Mrs. Stewart, of Stair, contains some curious variations verse 17 stands thus :—

"Then started Bess o' Annandale,
A deadly aith she's taen,
That she wad vote the border-knight,
Tho' she should vote her lane."

In verse 22 "Black Joan" says—

"For fools will prate o' right and wrang,
While knaves laugh them to scorn.
But the sodger's friends hae blawn the best,
So he shall bear the horn."

"Marjory o' the mony Lochs" exclaims—

"There's some great folk set light by me,
I set as light by them;
But I will send to London town,
Whom I lo'e best at hame."

And "Whiskey Jean that took her gill" is called throughout "Brandy Jean."

EPISTLE

TO ROBERT GRAHAM, Esq.

OF FINTRAY:

ON THE CLOSE OF THE DISPUTED ELECTION BETWEEN SIR JAMES JOHNSTON AND CAPTAIN MILLER, FOR THE DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BOROUGHS.

FINTRAY, my stay in worldly strife,
Friend o' my muse, friend o' my life,
Are ye as idle's I am ?
Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg,
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
And ye shall see me try him.

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig bears
Who left the all-important cares
Of princes and their darlings ;
And, bent on winning borough towns,
Came shaking hands wi' wabster lowns,
And kissing barefit carlins.

Combustion thro' our boroughs rode
Whistling his roaring pack abroad
Of mad unmuzzled lions ;
As Queensberry buff and blue unfurled,
And Westerha' and Hopeton hurled
To every Whig defiance.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,
Th' unmanner'd dust might soil his star ;
Besides, he hated bleeding :
But left behind him heroes bright,
Heroes in Cæsarean fight,
Or Ciceronian pleading.

O ! for a throat like huge Mons-meg,
To muster o'er each ardent Whig
Beneath Drumlanrig's banner ;
Heroes and heroines commix,
All in the field of politics,
To win immortal honour.

M'Murdo and his lovely spouse,
(Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows !)
Led on the loves and graces :
She won each gaping burgess' heart,
While he, all-conquering, play'd his part
Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch led a light-arm'd corps,
Tropes, metaphors and figures pour,
Like Hecla streaming thunder :
Glenriddel, skill'd in rusty coins,
Blew up each Tory's dark designs,
And bar'd the treason under.

In either wing two champions fought,
Redoubted Staig * who set at nought
The wildest savage Tory :
And Welsh † who ne'er yet flinch'd his ground,
High-wav'd his magnum-bonum round
With Cyclopeian fury.

Miller brought up th' artillery ranks,
The many-pounders of the Banks,
Resistless desolation !
While Maxwelton, that baron bold,
'Mid Lawson's ‡ port entrench'd his hold,
And threaten'd worse damnation.

To these what Tory hosts oppos'd,
With these what Tory warriors clos'd,
Surpasses my descriving :
Squadrons extended long and large,
With furious speed rush to the charge,
Like raging devils driving.

* Provost Staig of Dumfries. † Sheriff Welsh.
‡ Lawson, a wine merchant in Dumfries.

What verse can sing, what prose narrate,
The butcher deeds of bloody fate
Amid this mighty tulzie!
Grim Horror girn'd—pale Terror roar'd,
As Murther at his thrapple shor'd,
And hell mix'd in the brulzie.

As highland craigs by thunder cleft,
When light'nings fire the stormy lift,
Hurl down with crashing rattle:
As flames among a hundred woods;
As headlong foam a hundred floods,
Such is the rage of battle!

The stubborn Tories dare to die;
As soon the rooted oaks would fly
Before th' approaching fellers:
The Whigs come on like Ocean's roar,
When all his wintry billows pour
Against the Buchan Bullers.

Lo, from the shades of Death's deep night,
Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,
And think on former daring:
The muffled murtherer * of Charles
The Magna Charta flag unfurls,
All deadly gules it's bearing.

* The executioner of Charles I. was masked.

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame,
Bold Scrimgeour * follows gallant Graham,†
Auld Covenanters shiver.
(Forgive, forgive, much wrong'd Montrose!
Now death and hell engulph thy foes,
Thou liv'st on high for ever!)

Still o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns;
But Fate the word has spoken:
For woman's wit and strength o' man,
Alas! can do but what they can!
The Tory ranks are broken.

O that my een were flowing burns,
My voice a lioness that mourns
Her darling cubs' undoing!
That I might greet, that I might cry,
While Tories fall, while Tories fly,
And furious Whigs pursuing!

What Whig but melts for good Sir James?
Dear to his country by the names
Friend, patron, benefactor!
Not Pulteney's wealth can Pulteney save!
And Hopeton falls, the generous brave!
And Stewart‡ bold as Hector.

...rimgeour. Lord Dundee. † Graham, Marquis of Montrose.
‡ Stewart of Hillside.

Thou, Pitt, shalt rue this overthrow;
And Thurlow growl a curse of woe;
And Melville melt in wailing!
How Fox and Sheridan rejoice!
And Burke shall sing, O Prince, arise,
Thy power is all prevailing!

For your poor friend, the Bard, afar
He only hears and sees the war,
A cool spectator purely:
So, when the storm the forest rends,
The robin in the hedge descends,
And sober chirps securely.

The upshot of the election contest is related in this epistle: Miller of Dalswinton triumphed, and Johnston of Westerhall was defeated.' I have two copies of the poem before me, both in the Poet's handwriting; one belonging to Mrs. M'Murdo seems the most correct: from the other, the property of Miss Stewart of Afton, some curious and characteristic variations will be given. Burns, in these poems, had a difficult part to play, and he seems to have taken the wisest course—he laughed on both sides, taking part with neither: his friends in Nithsdale were chiefly Whigs, and he looked to the Tories for getting forward in the Excise. "I am too little a man," he says to Fintray, "to have any political attachments: I am deeply indebted to, and have the warmest veneration for, individuals of both parties; but a man who has it in his power to be the father of a country, and who acts like his Grace of Queensberry, is

a character that one cannot speak of with patience." As M'Murdo was the Duke's friend, the copy belonging to that family is moderate on "the Douglas" in the second verse: not so the Afton copy; the Poet speaks out freely:—

> "I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig bears,
> Wha left the all-important cares,
> Of fiddles, wh-res, and hunters.
> And bent on buying borough-towns,
> Came shaking hands wi' wabster louns,
> And kissing barefit bunters."

Almost all the friends whom the Poet's genius had obtained for him in the two counties are mustered in song; and

> "The battle closes thick and bloody."

In the Afton manuscript a verse is added, which some may think necessary, and others superfluous; it is, however, characteristic:—

> "Now for my friends and brethren's sakes,
> And for my dear-lov'd land o'cakes,
> I pray with holy fire:
> Lord send a rough-shod troop o'hell,
> O'er a' wad Scotland buy or sell,
> To grind them in the mire."

With this poem closes the first series of the Poet's election ballads; he appears, in an after contest of the same kind, in a rougher mood.

ON

CAPTAIN GROSE'S

PEREGRINATIONS THROUGH SCOTLAND,

COLLECTING

THE ANTIQITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.

Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groat's ;
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede you tent it :
A chiel's amang you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it !

If in your bounds ye chance to light
Upon a fine, fat, fodgel wight,
O' stature short, but genius bright,
That's he, mark weel—
And wow! he has an unco slight
O' cauk and keel.

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin,
Or kirk deserted by its riggin,
It's ten to one ye'll find him snug in
Some eldritch part,
Wi' deils, they say, L—d safe's! colleaguin'
At some black art.

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or chamer,
Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamor,
And you deep read in hell's black grammar,
Warlocks and witches;
Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
Ye midnight b——es!

It's tauld he was a sodger bred,
And ane wad rather fa'n than fled;
But now he's quat the spurtle-blade,
And dog-skin wallet,
And ta'en the—Antiquarian trade,
I think they call it.

He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets:
Rusty airn caps and jinglin jackets,
Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets,
A towmont guid;
And parritch-pats, and auld saut-backets,
Afore the flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder;
Auld Tubalcain's fire-shool and fender;
That which distinguished the gender
O' Balaam's ass;
A broom-stick o' the witch o' Endor,
Weel shod wi' brass.

Forbye, he'll shape you aff, fu' gleg,
The cut of Adam's philibeg:
The knife that nicket Abel's craig
He'll prove you fully,
It was a faulding jocteleg,
Or lang-kail gully.—

But wad ye see him in his glee,
For meikle glee and fun has he,
Then set him down, and twa or three
Guid fellows wi' him;
And port, O port! shine thou a wee,
And then ye'll see him!

Now, by the pow'rs o' verse and prose!
Thou art a dainty chiel, O Grose!—
Whae'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
They sair misca' thee;
I'd take the rascal by the nose,
Wad say, Shame fa' thee

The person whom this facetious poem celebrates was a zealous antiquary and fond of wit and wine. He had served in the army, and, retiring from it, dedicated his leisure and his talents to investigate the antiquities of his country. He found his way to Friars-Carse, where some of the ablest antiquaries of Scotland occasionally met: and at the "board of Glenriddel," he saw Burns for the first time. It is a tradition in the vale that the Englishman heard with wonder the sarcastic sallies, epigrammatic remarks, and eloquent bursts of the Scot; while the latter was struck with the remarkable corpulency of the "little round fat oily man," and the almost poetic feeling with which he talked

"Of parritch pats and auld saut backets
Afore the flood."

The wine of Glenriddel, too, aided in tightening the bands of acquaintanceship. The poem flew before Grose over Scotland—it is said he was not pleased to be so heralded, and, above all, little relished the allusions to his corpulency—he thought, too, that his researches were treated with too little gravity. These sentiments had not, however, reached the Poet, when he writes to Grose to call on his friend Dugald Stewart.—"Mr. Stewart's principal characteristic is your favourite feature; that sterling independence of mind, which though every man's right, so few men have the courage to claim, and fewer still the magnanimity to support:—unseduced by splendour and undisgusted by wretchedness, he appreciates the merits of the actors in the great drama of life, merely as they perform their parts—in short he is a man after your own heart, and I comply with his earnest request in letting you know that he wishes above all things to meet with you." The meeting took place at Catrine as the antiquary was on his way to examine the ruins of Sorn Castle.

WRITTEN IN A WRAPPER,

ENCLOSING

A LETTER TO CAPTAIN GROSE.

KEN ye ought o' Captain Grose?
Igo and ago,
If he's amang his friends or foes?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he south or is he north?
Igo and ago,
Or drowned in the river Forth?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he slain by Highlan' bodies?
Igo and ago,
And eaten like a wether-haggis?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he to Abram's bosom gane?
Igo and ago,
Or haudin Sarah by the wame?
Iram, coram, dago.

Where'er he be, the Lord be near him!
Igo and ago,
As for the deil, he daur na steer him!
Iram, coram, dago.

But please transmit the enclosed letter,
Igo and ago,
Which will oblige your humble debtor,
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye hae auld stanes in store,
Igo, and ago,
The very stanes that Adam bore,
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye get in glad possession,
Igo, and ago,
The coins o' Satan's coronation!
Iram, coram, dago.

It appears that Burns made out some antiquarian and legendary memoranda respecting the ruins in Kyle, and addressed them to his late facetious gossip Grose, under cover to Cardonnel, a well-known northern antiquary. As his mind teemed with poetry, he could not let this opportunity pass, but humming, as he folded up the letter, the well-known air of "Sir John Malcolm," wrote these lines on the wrapper. Here, again, he touched on the captain's corpulency, and raised a laugh louder than the latter liked. Cardonnel read the verses wherever he

went, and the condoling inquiry over all Edinburgh was—

> "Is he slain by Highlan' bodies,
> And eaten like a wether-haggis?"

The old song of "Sir John Malcolm," which the Poet had in his mind when he wrote to Cardonnel, is to be found in "Yair's Charmer;" it has some humour:—

> "O keep ye weel frae Sir John Malcolm,
> Igo and ago,
> If he's a wise man I mistak' him,
> Iram, coram, dago.
> O keep ye weel frae Sandie Don,
> Igo and ago,
> He's ten times dafter than Sir John,
> Iram, coram, dago.
>
> To hear them of their travels talk,
> Igo and ago,
> To gae to London's but a walk,
> Iram, coram, dago.
> I hae been at Amsterdam,
> Igo and ago,
> Where I saw mony a braw madame,
> Iram, coram, dago.
>
> To see the wonders of the deep,
> Igo and ago,
> Wad gar a man both wail and weep,
> Iram, coram, dago.
> To see the leviathans skip,
> Igo and ago,
> And wi' their tail ding owre a ship,
> Iram, coram, dago."

It is said that a former baronet of Lochore and his neighbour "Sandie Don," indulged so much over the bottle in romancing, that a friend, who had a knack at rhyme, reproved them in these facetious lines; it is not said with what effect.

TAM O' SHANTER,

A TALE.

"Of brownyis and of bogilis full is this buke."
GAWIN DOUGLAS.

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak' the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' gettin fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Where sits our sulky sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses.)

O Tam! had'st thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirton Jean till Monday.
She prophesy'd, that late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon;
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale:—Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;

Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou' for weeks thegither!
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And ay the ale was growing better:
The landlady and Tam grew gracious;
Wi' favours secret, sweet, and precious;
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle—
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himself amang the nappy!
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;

That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The de'il had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.—

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;

And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Where hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Where Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou can'st make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae we'll face the devil!—
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'd nae deils a boddle.
But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,
'Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillon brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels:
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;

A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge;
He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.—
Coffins stood round, like open presses;
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantrip slight
Each in its cauld hand held a light—
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns;
Twa span-lang, wee unchristen'd bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rusted,
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The gray hairs yet stack to the heft:
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,

And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans
A' plump and strapping, in their teens;
Their sarks instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies!

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags, wad spean a foal,
Lowping an' flinging on a cummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kenn'd what was what fu' brawlie,
There was ae winsome wench and walie,
That night inlisted in the core,
(Lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore;
For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear),
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie—

Ah! little kenn'd thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches!

But here my muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd;
Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
'Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!'
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch screech and hollow.

Ah, Tam! Ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane* of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they darena cross!
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think! ye may buy the joys o'er dear—
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

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* It is a well-known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with *bogles*, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.

It would occupy many pages to quote half of the praise which poets, and critics, and biographers have lavished on this matchless poem :—"Who but some impenetrable dunce," observes Wordsworth, speaking of the alleged indulgencies of Burns, "or narrow-minded puritan in works of art, ever read without delight the picture which he has drawn of the convivial exaltation of the rustic adventurer, Tam o' Shanter? The Poet fears not to tell the reader in the outset, that his hero was a desperate and sottish drunkard, whose excesses were frequent as his opportunities. This reprobate sits down to his cups while the storm is roaring and heaven and earth are in confusion: the night is driven on by song and tumultuous noise—laughter and jest thicken as the beverage improves upon the palate: conjugal fidelity archly bends to the service of general benevolence: selfishness is not absent, but wearing the mask of social cordiality—and while these various elements of humanity are blended into one proud and happy composition of elated spirits, the anger of the tempest without doors only heightens and sets off the enjoyment within.—I pity him who cannot perceive that in all this, though there was no moral purpose there is a moral effect:—

'Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the *ills* of life victorious.'

What a lesson do these words convey of charitable indulgence for the vicious habits of the principal actor in this scene, and of those who resemble him!—men who, to the rigidly virtuous, are objects almost of loathing, and whom, therefore, they cannot serve!"

In the inimitable tale of Tam o' Shanter," says Sir Walter Scott, "Burns has left us sufficient evidence of his ability to combine the ludicrous with the awful, and even the horrible. No Poet, with the exception of Shakspeare, ever possessed the power of exciting the

most varied and discordant emotions with such rapid transitions."—"I shall not presume to say," observes Byron, in his controversy with Bowles, "that Pope is as high a poet as Shakspeare and Milton, though his enemy Warton places him immediately under them. I would no more say this than I would assert in the mosque—once St. Sophia's—that Socrates was a greater man than Mahomet. But if I say that he is very near them, it is no more than has been asserted of Burns, who is supposed

'To rival all but Shakspeare's name below.'

I say nothing against this opinion. But of what '*order*,' according to the poetical aristocracy, are Burns's poems? There are his *opus magnum* 'Tam o' Shanter,' a *tale*: 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,' a descriptive sketch: some others in the same style; the rest are songs. So much for the *rank* of his productions: the *rank* of Burns is the very first of his art". It is needless to add more "testimonies of authors;" the applause of his country is enough.

On comparing the printed copy of the poem with the Afton manuscript, some variations appear:—

"Three lawyers' tongues turned inside out,
Wi' lies seamed like a beggar's clout:
Three priests' hearts rotten, black as muck,
Lay stinking, vile, in every neuk."

It occurred to Burns afterwards that "Three Priests' hearts," could not well be present in four corners, which caused him to alter it to—

"And priests' hearts rotten, black as muck."

But as this extended a limited sarcasm, he was easily prevailed upon by Lord Woodhouselee to omit the lines on lawyers as well as priests. The Poet in his manuscript thus intimates the localities of the tale.—"Alloway

Kirk, the scene of the following poem is an old ruin in Ayrshire, hard by the great roed from Ayr to Maybole, on the banks of the river Doon, and near the old bridge of that name."

I remember with what eagerness Tam o' Shanter was circulated among the Scottish cottages, and how it was scarcely possible for one peasant to meet another without one or both indulging in quotations. Its history has already been related in the Life of the Poet, and the traditions referred to on which it was founded. The poem was the work of a single day, and the circumstance was strongly impressed on the mind of Mrs. Burns. The Poet had lingered longer than his wont by the river side, and taking her children with her, she went out to join him. He was busily engaged crooning to himself, she informed Cromek, and perceiving that her presence was an interruption she loitered behind with her little ones among the broom. Her attention was presently attracted by the strange and wild gesticulations of the bard, who now at some distance was agonized with an ungovernable excess of joy. He was reciting very loud, and with the tears rolling down his cheeks, those animated verses which he had just conceived:—

"Now, Tam! O, Tam! had thae been queans,
A' plump and strappin' in their teens,
Their sarks instead of creeshie flannin,
Been snaw-white se'enteen hunder linen:
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush o' gude blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them aff my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies."

On going home he connected the loose fragments which he had pencilled down with the passages composed in his mind, and the result was the inimitable story as it now stands—admitted by universal consent to be the happiest of all his works. The walk on Nithside, where his wife found him warmed with the inspiration of his sub-

ject, and reciting aloud, is kept in kindly remembrance by the people of the valley; and I am pleased to think that no one will be allowed to do the walk any dishonour, for Ellisland is now the property of my schoolfellow and friend, Joseph Taylor, who respects whatever is connected with the fame of its former illustrious tenant.

Though written in the vale of Nith, the inspiration as well as subject came from the west. Concerning the scene and the hero, Robert Chambers has given an account sufficient to satisfy all reasonable curiosity:—

"Alloway Kirk, with its little enclosed burial-ground, next demands the pilgrim's attention. It has long been roofless, but the walls are pretty well preserved, and it still retains its bell at the east end. Upon the whole, the spectator is struck with the idea that the witches must have had a rather narrow stage for the performance of their revels, as described in the poem. The inner area is now divided by a partition-wall, and one part forms the family burial-place of the late Mr. Cathcart, who may perhaps be better known by his judicial designation of Lord Alloway. The "winnock bunker in the east," where sat the awful musician of the party, is a conspicuous feature, being a small window, divided by a thick mullion. Around the building are the vestiges of other openings, at any of which the hero of the tale may be supposed to have looked in upon the hellish scene. Within the last few years the old oaken rafters of the kirk were mostly entire, but they have now been entirely taken away, to form, in various shapes, memorials of a place so remarkably signalized by genius. It is necessary for those who survey the ground in reference to the poem, to be informed that the old road from Ayr to this spot, by which Burns supposed his hero to have approached Alloway Kirk, was considerably to the west of the present one, which, nevertheless, has existed since

before the time of Burns. Upon a field about a quarter of a mile to the north-west of the kirk, is a single tree enclosed with a paling, the last remnant of a group which covered

- the cairn
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn;'

and immediately beyond that object is

- the foord,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;'

(namely, a ford over a small burn which soon after joins the Doon); being two places which Tam o' Shanter is described as having passed on his solitary way. The road then made a sweep towards the river, and, passing a well which trickles down into the Doon, where formerly stood a thorn, on which an individual, called in the poem "Mungo's mither," committed suicide, approached Alloway Kirk upon the west. These circumstances may here appear trivial, but it is surprising with what interest any visitor to the real scene will inquire into, and behold every part of it which can be associated, however remotely, with the poem of 'Tam o' Shanter.' The churchyard contains several old monuments, of a very humble description, marking the resting-places of undistinguished persons, who formerly lived in the neighbourhood, and probably had the usual hereditary title to little spaces of ground in this ancient cemetery. Among those persons rests William Burness, father of the Poet, over whose grave the son had piously raised a small stone, recording his name and the date of his death, together with the short poetical tribute to his memory which is copied in the works of the Bard. But for this monument, long ago destroyed and carried away piece-meal, there is now substituted one of somewhat finer proportions. But the churchyard of Alloway has now become fashionable with the dead as well as the

living. Its little area is absolutely crowded with modern monuments, referring to persons, many of whom have been brought from considerable distances to take their rest in this doubly consecrated ground. Among these is one to the memory of a person named Tyrie, who, visiting the spot some years ago, happened to express a wish that he might be laid in Alloway churchyard, and, as fate would have it, was interred in the spot he had pointed out within a fortnight. Nor is this all; for even the neighbouring gentry are now contending for departments in this fold of the departed, and it is probable that the elegant mausolea of rank and wealth will soon be jostling with the stunted obelisks of humble worth and noteless poverty.

"It may be appropriately mentioned at this place, that the original of Tam o' Shanter was an individual named Douglas Graham, a Carrick farmer. Shanter is a farm on the Carrick shore, near Kirkoswald, which Graham long possessed. The man was in sober, or rather drunken truth, the "bletherin', blusterin' blellum" that the poet has described; and his wife was as veritably a lady who most anxiously discouraged drinking in her husband. Burns, when a boy, spent some time at Kirkoswald, in the house of a maternal uncle, who at once practised the craft of a miller, and sold home-brewed ale. To this house, Graham and his brother-in-law, the farmer of Duquhat (which lies between Kirkoswald and Shanter), used to resort; and finding in Burns some qualities, which, boy as he was, recommended him to their attention, they made him every thing but their drinking companion. Sometimes, the two topers, tired of ale, which they said was rather cold for the stomach, would adjourn to Duquhat, and correct their native liquor with good brandy, which at that time was supplied by smugglers to every house in Carrick at a price next to nominal.

Burns would accompany them in these migrations, an observant boy, inspecting the actions of his dotard seniors. After, perhaps, spending half a night at Duquhat, the farmer of that place, with Burns, would accompany Graham to Shanter; but as the idea of the "sulky sullen dame" rose in their minds, a debate would arise as to the propriety of venturing, even in full strength, into the house, and Graham, perhaps, would, after all, return to Duquhat, and continue the debauch till next day; content to put off the present evil, even at the hazard of encountering it in an accumulated form afterwards. Such were the opportunities afforded to the poet of observing the life of the Carrick farmers of those days.

"It is not easy, even for the actual writer of a fiction, to point out the skeleton ideas and incidents, the shadowy fragments of original and real life, which he has used in composing his work; and any task of this kind must, of course, be still more difficult in another party, writing at the distance of a generation. Among the facts, however, which must have gone to the composition of 'Tam o' Shanter,' there is one, never yet noticed, which probably suggested the tail-piece with which the diabolic panorama is concluded. Douglas Graham had, it seems, a good gray mare, which was very much identified with his own appearance. One day, being in Ayr, he tied the animal to a ring at the door of a public-house, where contrary to his original intentions, he tarried so long that the boys, in the meantime, plucked away the whole of his mare's tail, for the purpose of making fishing-lines. It was not till the next morning, when he awoke from a protracted bouse, that the circumstance was discovered by his son, who came in, crying that the mare had lost her tail. Graham, when he comprehended the amount of the disaster, was, it seems, so much bewildered as to its cause, that he could only attribute it,

after a round oath, to the agency of witches. There can be no doubt, we think, that this affair, working in Burns's recollection, was seized upon to serve as the catastrophe to a story, of which the main part, it is well known, was a fire-side legend, respecting a person of unknown name and character.

"The Monument next demands attention. It was erected about ten years ago by subscription, and has only recently been surrounded in proper style by a garden of evergreens. Hardly any object of the kind could be more truly beautiful or worthy of its purpose than this happily designed and happily situated building; nor could any thing be more truly entitled to praise than the manner in which it is kept and managed. The interior contains a capital copy of the original portrait of the Poet, by Nasmyth, besides various other objects of less moment. In a grotto apart are now placed the celebrated statues of Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnny, executed by Mr. James Thom, the self-taught sculptor. After performing the tour of the United Kingdom, and gathering a sum little short, we believe, of five thousand pounds, these singularly felicitous grotesques have been permanently fixed here, being, in fact, the property of the Monument Committee. The arrangements made for their permanent exhibition are in very good taste, and answer the purpose remarkably well."

ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB

TO

THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY.

Long life, my Lord, an' health be yours,
Unskaith'd by hunger'd Highland boors;
Lord grant nae duddie desperate beggar,
Wi' dirk, claymore, or rusty trigger,
May twin auld Scotland o' a life
She likes—as lambkins like a knife.
Faith, you and A———s were right
To keep the Highland hounds in sight,
I doubt na'! they wad bid nae better
Than let them ance out owre the water;
Then up amang thae lakes and seas
They'll mak' what rules and laws they please;
Some daring Hancocke, or a Franklin,
May set their Highland bluid a ranklin';
Some Washington again may head them
Or some Montgomery, fearless lead them,
Till God knows what may be effected
When by such heads and hearts directed—
Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire
May to Patrician rights aspire!

Nae sage North, now, nor sager Sackville,
To watch and premier o'er the pack vile,
An' whare will ye get Howes and Clintons
To bring them to a right repentance,
To cowe the rebel generation,
An' save the honour o' the nation?
They an' be d——d! what right hae they
To meat or sleep, or light o' day?
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordship likes to gie them?

But hear, my lord! Glengarry, hear!
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear;
Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies,
I canna' say but they do gaylies;
They lay aside a' tender mercies,
An' tirl the hallions to the birses;
Yet while they're only poind't and herriet,
They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit;
But smash them! crash them a' to spails!
An' rot the dyvors i' the jails!
The young dogs, swinge them to the labour;
Let wark an' hunger mak' them sober!
The hizzies, if they're aughtlins fawsont,
Let them in Drury-lane be lesson'd!
An' if the wives an' dirty brats
E'en thigger at your doors an' yetts
Flaffan wi' duds an' grey wi' beas',
Frightin' awa your deucks an' geese,

Get out a horsewhip or a jowler,
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
An gar the tattered gypsies pack
Wi' a' their bastarts on their back!
Go on, my Lord! I lang to meet you,
An' in my house at hame to greet you;
Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle,
The benmost neuk beside the ingle,
At my right han' assigned your seat
'Tween Herod's hip an Polycrate,—
Or if you on your station tarrow,
Between Almagro and Pizarro,
A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin't;
An' till ye come—Your humble servant,

BEELZEBUB.

June 1st, Anno Mundi 5790.

In the Scots Magazine for February, 1818, "The Address of Beelzebub" made its appearance—printed, I have since been assured from the manuscript of Burns, and headed thus:—"To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbyne, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23d of May last, at the Shakspeare, Covent-Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the society were informed by Mr. M———, of A——s, were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters, whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands

of Mr. M'Donald of Glengarry to the wilds of Canada in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY."

The person who made the communication signs himself R. W. and writes from Ayr: some of his observations are sensible and to the point.—"You will find several indifferent enough lines in it, and one or two rather rough expressions, but nothing I think that can offend any true old-fashioned unsophisticated Scotsman, or even the more fastidious southron who has not lost all remembrance of Fielding, or who has learned to estimate the irresistible naïveté of the Author of Waverley. It has never been printed before, and I consider it a duty to preserve from oblivion every production which the public has a claim to inherit as the legacy of departed genius, unless its publication be offensive to right feeling or derogatory to the talents and character of the author. You will recognize in it something of the compound vigour of Burns's genius: the rustic but keen severity of his sarcasm, and the manly detestation of oppression real or supposed, which so strongly characterized him. For your entire satisfaction, I enclose the original in his own hand-writing: it was given to me by a friend who got it many years ago from the well-known, 'ready-witted Rankine,' the Poet's early and intimate acquaintance."

TO

JOHN TAYLOR.

WITH Pegasus upon a day,
  Apollo weary flying,
Through frosty hills the journey lay,
  On foot the way was plying.

Poor slip-shod giddy Pegasus
  Was but a sorry walker;
To Vulcan then Apollo goes,
  To get a frosty calker.

Obliging Vulcan fell to work,
  Threw by his coat and bonnet,
And did Sol's business in a crack;
  Sol paid him with a sonnet.

Ye Vulcan's sons of Wanlockhead,
  Pity my sad disaster;
My Pegasus is poorly shod—
  I'll pay you like my master.

ROBERT BURNS.

Ramages, 3 o'clock, (no date.)

To John Brown, Esq., Ayr, the admirers of Burns are indebted for this very singular petition and the following explanation. The Poet, it seems, during one of his journeys over his ten parishes as an exciseman, had arrived at Wanlockhead on a winter day, when the roads were slippery with ice, and Jenny Geddes (or Peg Nicholson) kept her feet with difficulty. The blacksmith of the place was busied with other pressing matters in the forge, and could not spare time for "frosting" the shoes of the Poet's mare, and it is likely he would have proceeded on his dangerous journey had he not bethought himself of propitiating the son of Vulcan with verse. He called for pen and ink, wrote these verses to John Taylor, a person of influence in Wanlockhead; and when he had done, a gentleman of the name of Sloan, who accompanied him, endorsed it in prose in these words:—"J. Sloan's best compliments to Mr. Taylor, and it would be doing him and the Ayrshire Bard a particular favour, if he would oblige them instanter with his agreeable company. The road has been so slippery that the riders and the brutes were equally in danger of getting some of their bones broken. For the Poet, his life and limbs are of some consequence to the world; but for poor Sloan, it matters very little what may become of him. The whole of this business is to ask the favour of getting the horses' shoes sharpened." On the receipt of this, Taylor spoke to the smith; the smith flew to his tools, sharpened the horses' shoes, and, it is recorded, lived thirty years to say he had never been "weel paid but ance, and that was by a poet, who paid him in money, paid him in drink, and paid him in verse.

LAMENT

OF

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING

I.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
  On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
  Out o'er the grassy lea:
Now Phœbus cheers the crystal streams
  And glads the azure skies;
But nought can glad the weary wight
  That fast in durance lies.

II.

Now lav'rocks wake the merry morn,
  Aloft on dewy wing;
The merle, in his noontide bow'r,
  Makes woodland echoes ring;
The mavis wild wi' mony a note,
  Sings drowsy day to rest:
In love and freedom they rejoice,
  Wi' care nor thrall opprest.

III.

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
The primrose down the brae;
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the slae;
The meanest hind in fair Scotland
May rove their sweets amang;
But I, the Queen of a' Scotland,
Maun lie in prison strang!

IV.

I was the Queen o' bonnie France,
Where happy I hae been;
Fu' lightly rase I in the morn,
As blythe lay down at e'en:
And I'm the sov'reign of Scotland,
And mony a traitor there;
Yet here I lie in foreign bands,
And never-ending care.

V.

But as for thee, thou false woman!—
My sister and my fae,
Grim vengeance yet shall whet a sword
That thro' thy soul shall gae!
The weeping blood in woman's breast
Was never known to thee;
Nor th' balm that draps on wounds of woe
Frae woman's pitying e'e.

VI.

My son! my son! may kinder stars
  Upon thy fortune shine;
And may those pleasures gild thy reign,
  That ne'er wad blink on mine!
God keep thee frae thy mother's faes,
  Or turn their hearts to thee:
And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend,
  Remember him for me!

VII.

O! soon, to me, may summer-suns
  Nae mair light up the morn!
Nae mair, to me, the autumn winds
  Wave o'er the yellow corn!
And in the narrow house o' death
  Let winter round me rave;
And the next flow'rs that deck the spring
  Bloom on my peaceful grave!

The Lady Winifred Maxwell Constable, it is said, expressed a wish for a poem on the woes of Queen Mary; and Burns, touched with the pathos of Lord Maxwell's "Good-Night," composed the "Queen Mary's Lament" with his thoughts on that fine ballad. He has caught the olden air and tone rather than imitated the sentiments:—

"Adieu, madame, my mother dear,
  But and my sisters three!
Adieu, fair Robert of Orchardstane,
  My heart is wae for thee.
Adieu, the lily and the rose,
  The primrose fair to see;
Adieu, my lady and only joy!
  For I may not stay with thee.

Adieu ! Dumfries, my proper place,
  But and Carlaverock fair !
Adieu, my castle o' the Thrieve,
  Wi' a' my buildings there ;
Adieu, Lochmaben's gate sae fair,
  And Langholme-holm where birks there be ;
Adieu, my ladye and only joy !
  For trust me I may not stay with thee."

The Poet was well pleased, it seems, with his performance.—" Whether it is," he says to Graham of Fintray, " that the story of our Mary Queen of Scots has a peculiar effect on the feelings of a poet, or whether I have, in the enclosed ballad, succeeded beyond my usual poetic success, I know not, but it has pleased me beyond any effort of my muse for a good while past." The poem was praised by Lady Winifred, and rewarded by a present of a valuable snuff-box, with the portrait of Queen Mary on the lid. When he visited Terreagles house, he was shown the bed in which that princess slumbered during one troubled night—an original letter from Charles I., requesting the Earl of Nithsdale to arm and join him in England—and the account written by the Countess of Nithsdale of the last Earl's escape from the Tower in 1715.

Grahame, in his drama of Mary Stewart, loves to dwell on the merits as well as the beauty of this unfortunate queen :—

ELIZABETH. And does she touch the harp with equal skill ?
MELVIL. The chords, though struck with careless sweep, speak love,
Like Cupid's wing along Apollo's lyre ;
And with the notes so sweet is blent her voice
In magic harmony, that none may know
Which is the voice, and which the silver string.
ELIZABETH. Good—good ; that she excels
In each external grace we know ;—but tell me,
Is she much versed in languages ?
MELVIL. She speaks the tongues of Scotland and of France,
With equal grace ; Italia's is her sport ;
Each dialect her people use she knows ;
And to the humblest she so suits her phrase,
That rustic maids, at first abashed, look up,
Thinking they hear a sister cottager.

THE WHISTLE.

I SING of a whistle, a whistle of worth
I sing of a whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish king,
And long with this whistle all Scotland shall ring.

Old Loda,* still rueing the arm of Fingal,
The god of the bottle sends down from his hall—
" This whistle's your challenge—to Scotland get o'er,
" And drink them to hell, Sir! or ne'er see me more!"

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell,
What champions ventur'd, what champions fell;
The son of great Loda was conqueror still,
And blew on the whistle his requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scaur,
Unmatch'd at the bottle, unconquer'd in war,
He drank his poor godship as deep as the sea,
No tide of the Baltic e'er drunker than he.

* See Ossian's Caric-thura.

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain'd;
Which now in his house has for ages remain'd;
Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,
The jovial contest again have renew'd.

Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law;
And trusty Glenriddel, so skill'd in old coins;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep-read in old wines.

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil,
Desiring Glenriddel to yield up the spoil;
Or else he would muster the heads of the clan,
And once more, in claret, try which was the man.

"By the gods of the ancients!" Glenriddel replies,
"Before I surrender so glorious a prize,
I'll conjure the ghost of the great Rorie More,*
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o'er."

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend,
But he ne'er turn'd his back on his foe—or his friend,
Said, toss down the whistle, the prize of the field,
And knee-deep in claret, he'd die, or he'd yield.

To the board of Glenriddel our heroes repair,
So noted for drowning of sorrow and care;

* See Johnson's Tour to the Hebrides.

But for wine and for welcome not more known to
fame
Than the sense, wit, and taste of a sweet lovely
dame.

A bard was selected to witness the fray,
And tell future ages the feats of the day;
A bard who detested all sadness and spleen,
And wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

The dinner being over, the claret they ply,
And ev'ry new cork is a new spring of joy;
In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set,
And the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet.

Gay pleasure ran riot as bumpers ran o'er;
Bright Phœbus ne'er witness'd so joyous a core,
And vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn,
Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

Six bottles a-piece had well wore out the night,
When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,
Turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestor did.

Then worthy Glenriddel, so cautious and sage,
No longer the warfare, ungodly, would wage;
A high-ruling Elder to wallow in wine!
He left the foul business to folks less divine.

The gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end;
But who can with fate and quart-bumpers contend?
Though fate said—a hero shall perish in light;
So up rose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight.

Next up rose our bard, like a prophet in drink:—
"Craigdarroch, thou'lt soar when creation shall sink;
But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme,
Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime!

"Thy line, that have struggled for freedom with Bruce,
Shall heroes and patriots ever produce:
So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay;
The field thou hast won, by yon bright god of day!"

"As the authentic prose history," says Burns, "of the 'Whistle' is curious, I shall here give it. In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony whistle, which at the commencement of the orgies he laid on the table, and whoever was the last able to blow it, every body else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the Scots Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else of acknowledging their inferiority. After many overthrows on the part

of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lawrie, of Maxwelton, ancestor of the present worthy baronet of that name; who, after three days and three nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

'And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill,'

"Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert before mentioned, afterwards lost the whistle to Walter Riddel, of Glenriddel, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's.—On Friday, the 16th of October, 1790, at Friar's-Carse, the whistle was once more contended for, as related in the ballad, by the present Sir Robert of Maxwelton; Robert Riddel, Esq. of Glenriddel, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddel, who won the whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq. of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert; which last gentleman carried off the hard-won honours of the field."

The jovial contest took place in the dining-room of Friar's-Carse, in the presence of the Bard, who drank bottle and bottle about with them, and seemed quite disposed to take up the conqueror when the day dawned. The peasants of the neighbourhood hearing of the pleasant strife, went in groups to inquire how matters went, and all wished that Glenriddel might win, though they lamented that an elder should engage in such a business. Friar's-Carse is now the residence of Mrs. Crichton: the haunts dear to the Poet are not neglected, nor are the antiquarian collections of the former proprietor molested:—it is one of the loveliest spots on Nithside.

ELEGY

ON

MISS BURNET,

OF MONBODDO.

LIFE ne'er exulted in so rich a prize
As Burnet, lovely from her native skies;
Nor envious death so triumph'd in a blow,
As that which laid th' accomplish'd Burnet low.

Thy form and mind, sweet maid, can I forget?
In richest ore the brighest jewel set!
In thee, high Heaven above was truest shown,
As by his noblest work the Godhead best is known.

In vain ye flaunt in summer's pride, ye groves;
Thou crystal streamlet with thy flowery shore,
Ye woodland choir that chant your idle loves,
Ye cease to charm—Eliza is no more!

Ye heathy wastes, immix'd with reedy fens;
Ye mossy streams, with sedge and rushes stor'd;
Ye rugged cliffs, o'erhanging dreary glens,
To you I fly, ye with my soul accord.

Princes, whose cumb'rous pride was all their worth,
  Shall venal lays their pompous exit hail ?
And thou, sweet excellence ! forsake our earth,
  And not a muse in honest grief bewail ?

We saw thee shine in youth and beauty's pride,
  And virtue's light, that beams beyond the spheres ;
But, like the sun eclips'd at morning tide,
  Thou left'st us darkling in a world of tears.

The parent's heart that nestled fond in thee,
  That heart how sunk, a prey to grief and care ;
So deckt the woodbine sweet yon aged tree ;
  So from it ravish'd, leaves it bleak and bare.

The Poet thought so well of his verses on the death of the beautiful and accomplished Elizabeth Burnet, that he gave away many copies to his friends : two of these are now before me ; but they offer no variations worthy of remark. Her father, Lord Monboddo, was at once whimsical and acute ; odd in his manners and elegant. He asserted, in his Origin and Progress of Language, that men were originally no better than brutes : alike destitute of reason, language, conscience, and social affection. He maintained that civilized man is but an improved ourang-outang ; that men formerly had tails ; that beavers are social, reflective, and politic animals, and, in their natural state, are superior to uninstructed man, with whom all is the consequence of long experience, continued labour and application. He illustrated his strange opinions with many shrewd and acute remarks, but re-

joiced in no converts; he found men were too vain to acknowledge such paternity as a baboon. He had the reputation of giving the most elegant entertainments during his day in the northern metropolis; he had flowers of all hues and wines of all qualities: odours as well as light were diffused by lamps, nor was his entertainments without the charm of music.

"In domestic circumstances," says Chambers, in his agreeable biography, "Monboddo was particularly unfortunate. His wife, a very beautiful woman, died in child-bed. His son, a promising boy, in whose education he took great delight, was likewise snatched from his affections by a premature death: and his second daughter, in personal loveliness one of the first women of the age, was cut off by consumption, when only twenty-five years old. The praise of the Poet was not considered extravagant:—

'Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine.'"

LAMENT

FOR

JAMES, EARL OF GLENCAIRN.

I.

THE wind blew hollow frae the hills,
By fits the sun's departing beam
Look'd on the fading yellow woods
That wav'd o'er Lugar's winding stream:
Beneath a craigy steep, a bard,
Laden with years and meikle pain,
In loud lament bewail'd his lord,
Whom death had all untimely ta'en.

II.

He lean'd him to an ancient aik,
Whose trunk was mould'ring down with years;
His locks were bleached white with time,
His hoary cheek was wet wi' tears;
And as he touch'd his trembling harp,
And as he tun'd his doleful sang,
The winds, lamenting thro' their caves,
To echo bore the notes alang.

III.

" Ye scatter'd birds that faintly sing
  The reliques of the vernal quire!
Ye woods that shed on a' the winds
  The honours of the aged year!
A few short months, and glad and gay,
  Again ye'll charm the ear and e'e;
But nocht in all revolving time
  Can gladness bring again to me.

IV.

" I am a bending aged tree,
  That long has stood the wind and rain;
But now has come a cruel blast,
  And my last hold of earth is gane:
Nae leaf o' mine shall greet the spring,
  Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom;
But I maun lie before the storm,
  And ithers plant them in my room.

V.

" I've seen sae mony changefu' years,
  On earth I am a stranger grown;
I wander in the ways of men,
  Alike unknowing and unknown:
Unheard, unpitied, unrelieved,
  I bear alane my lade o' care,
For silent, low, on beds of dust,
  Lie a' that would my sorrows share.

VI.

" And last (the sum of a' my griefs !)
My noble master lies in clay ;
The flow'r amang our barons bold,
His country's pride ! his country's stay—
In weary being now I pine,
For a' the life of life is dead,
And hope has left my aged ken,
On forward wing for ever fled.

VII.

" Awake thy last sad voice, my harp !
The voice of woe and wild despair ;
Awake ! resound thy latest lay—
Then sleep in silence evermair !
And thou, my last, best, only friend,
That fillest an untimely tomb,
Accept this tribute from the bard
Thou brought from fortune's mirkest gloom.

VIII.

" In poverty's low barren vale
Thick mists, obscure, involv'd me round ;
Though oft I turn'd the wistful eye,
Nae ray of fame was to be found :
Thou found'st me, like the morning sun,
That melts the fogs in limpid air,
The friendless bard and rustic song
Became alike thy fostering care.

IX.

"O! why has worth so short a date?
While villains ripen gray with time;
Must thou, the noble, gen'rous, great,
Fall in bold manhood's hardy prime!
Why did I live to see that day?
A day to me so full of woe!—
O! had I met the mortal shaft
Which laid my benefactor low!

X.

"The bridegroom may forget the bride,
Was made his wedded wife yestreen:
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me!"

With James Cunningham, Earl of Glencairn, perished the last hope of Burns, of obtaining "a pension, post, or place" in his native land. He was generous and accomplished, and admired the Poet through his poetry; the last of the male line of the family became extinct by the death of this Earl's brother; the title has lain dormant since. The Glencairn Cunninghams are descended from Warnebald de Cunningham, a Norman, the companion of Hugh de Morville, Constable of Scotland, who died

in 1162. They were distinguished in the border-wars; and Alexander, the fifth Earl, a warrior, a poet, and a reformer, was one of the most active of the leaders of the Congregation, and undertook and accomplished some hazardous enterprises. Another of the line resisted with much gallantry the English under the Parliamentary leaders, and obtained the praise of Clarendon. The family, never rich, became very poor, and one of the Earls married a musician's daughter, with a handsome fortune. A son of this marriage, tradition says, was at a ball in Edinburgh, when a dispute arose between him and one of the Kennedys of Cassillis, regarding a suitable tune for the dance.—"I wish," said Cassillis, "that we had your grandfather here; he was skilful, I have heard."—"Yes," retorted Glencairn, "he excelled all the west in playing Johnny Faa." A duel was the consequence.

Burns mourned the death of the Earl with melancholy sincerity.—"As all the world knows," he says to Lady E. Cunningham, "my obligations to the late Earl of Glencairn, I would wish to show as openly that my heart glows, and shall ever glow, with the most grateful sense and remembrance of his Lordship's goodness. The sables I did myself the honour to wear to his Lordship's memory were not the 'mockery of woe.' Nor shall my gratitude perish with me. If, among my children, I shall have a son that has a heart, he shall hand it down to his child as a family honour, and a family debt, that my dearest existence I owe to the noble house of Glencairn." One of the Poet's sons, now a captain in the service of the East India Company, was baptized James Glencairn, after his beloved patron.

LINES

SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART., OF WHITE-FOORD,

WITH THE FOREGOING POEM.

Thou, who thy honour as thy God rever'st,
Who, save thy mind's reproach, nought earthly fear'st,
To thee this votive offering I impart,
The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
The friend thou valued'st, I, the patron, lov'd;
His worth, his honour, all the world approv'd.
We'll mourn till we too go as he has gone,
And tread the dreary path to that dark world unknown.

Sir John Whitefoord interested himself in the fortunes of Burns soon after the appearance of the first edition of his poems; for this the Poet was indebted to the active kindness of Dr. Mackenzie, who is still living to remember—and with silent pleasure—that he promoted his interest, spread his fame, and defended his character, in days when friends were few, and his great merits were unknown beyond the limits of Kyle. It is true that Burns, in one of his letters, attributes his notice to the spontaneous impulse of Sir John's own heart; but it is no less true that Mackenzie smoothed the way.

ADDRESS

TO

THE SHADE OF THOMSON,

ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE, WITH BAYS.

WHILE virgin Spring, by Eden's flood,
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between:

While Summer with a matron grace
Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling shade,
Yet oft, delighted, stops to trace
The progress of the spiky blade:

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects his aged head,
And sees, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed:

While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows:

So long, sweet Poet of the year!
Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won;
While Scotia, with exulting tear,
Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

"Lord Buchan has the pleasure to invite Mr. Burns to make one at the coronation of the bust of Thomson, on Ednam Hill, on the 22d of September; for which day perhaps his muse may inspire an ode suited to the occasion. Suppose Mr. Burns should, leaving the Nith, go across the country, and meet the Tweed at the nearest point from his farm, and, wandering along the pastoral banks of Thomson's pure parent stream, catch inspiration in the devious walk, till he finds Lord Buchan sitting on the ruins of Dryburgh. There the Commendator will give him a hearty welcome, and try to light his lamp at the pure flame of native genius, upon the altar of Caledonian virtue." To request the Poet to lay down his sickle when his harvest was half reaped, and traverse one of the wildest and most untrodden ways in Scotland, for the purpose of looking at the fantastic coronation of the bad bust of an excellent poet, was worthy of the Earl of Buchan. The poor bard made answer, that a week's absence in the middle of his harvest was a step he durst not venture upon—but he sent this poem

The Poet's manuscript affords the following interesting variations:—

"While cold-eyed Spring, a virgin coy,
Unfolds her verdant mantle sweet,
Or pranks the sod in frolic joy,
A carpet for her youthful feet:

"While Summer, with a matron's grace,
Walks stately in the cooling shade,
And oft delighted loves to trace
The progress of the spiky blade:

"While Autumn, benefactor kind,
With age's hoary honours clad,
Surveys, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed."

TO

ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.

OF FINTRAY.

LATE crippl'd of an arm, and now a leg,
About to beg a pass for leave to beg:
Dull, listless, teas'd, dejected, and deprest,
(Nature is adverse to a cripple's rest);
Will generous Graham list to his Poet's wail?
(It soothes poor misery, hearkening to her tale),
And hear him curse the light he first survey'd,
And doubly curse the luckless rhyming trade?

Thou, Nature, partial Nature! I arraign;
Of thy caprice maternal I complain.
The lion and the bull thy care have found,
One shakes the forests, and one spurns the ground:
Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,
Th' envenom'd wasp, victorious, guards his cell;
Thy minions, kings, defend, control, devour,
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power;
Foxes and statesmen, subtile wiles insure;
The cit and polecat stink, and are secure;
Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug;
Ev'n silly woman has her warlike arts,
Her tongue and eyes, her dreaded spear and darts;—

But, oh! thou bitter stepmother and hard,
To thy poor, fenceless, naked child—the Bard!
A thing unteachable in world's skill,
And half an idiot, too, more helpless still;
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun;
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun;
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas! not Amalthea's horn:
No nerves olfact'ry, Mammon's trusty cur,
Clad in rich dullness' comfortable fur;—
In naked feeling, and in aching pride,
He bears the unbroken blast from ev'ry side:
Vampyre booksellers drain him to the heart,
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart.

Critics!—appall'd I venture on the name,
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame:
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes!
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose.

His heart by causeless wanton malice wrung,
By blockheads' daring into madness stung;
His well-won bays, than life itself more dear,
By miscreants torn, who ne'er one sprig must wear:
Foil'd, bleeding, tortur'd, in the unequal strife,
The hapless poet flounders on through life;
'Till fled each hope that once his bosom fir'd,
And fled each muse that glorious once inspir'd,

Low sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead, even resentment, for his injur'd page,
He heeds or feels no more the ruthless critic's rage!

So, by some hedge, the gen'rous steed deceas'd,
For half-starv'd snarling curs a dainty feast:
By toil and famine wore to skin and bone,
Lies senseless of each tugging bitch's son.

O dulness! portion of the truly blest!
Calm shelter'd haven of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams.
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober selfish ease they sip it up:
Conscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
They only wonder "some folks" do not starve.
The grave sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad worthless dog.
When disappointment snaps the clue of hope,
And thro' disastrous night they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
And just conclude that "fools are fortune's care."
So, heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle muses' mad-cap train,
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain;

In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heav'n, or vaulted hell.

I dread thee, fate, relentless and severe,
With all a poet's, husband's, father's fear!
Already one strong hold of hope is lost,
Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust;
(Fled, like the sun eclips'd as noon appears,
And left us darkling in a world of tears:)
O! hear my ardent, grateful, selfish pray'r!—
Fintray, my other stay, long bless and spare!
Thro' a long life his hopes and wishes crown;
And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!
May bliss domestic smooth his private path;
Give energy to life; and soothe his latest breath,
With many a filial tear circling the bed of death!

The Poet complains in this vigorous epistle that he is maimed leg and arm, and about to "beg a pass for leave to beg." This poem was written for the purpose of preparing the way for a humble request. Burns began to feel that his weekly expeditions in the ten parishes were matters of great toil as well as expense: he expressed a wish to be removed to a district of moderate bounds, that he might have more time for the service of the muse.

That Burns rode hard, some of his readers may have already surmised from his adventures with Jenny Geddes and Peg Nicholson. In a letter to Collector Mitchell, he speaks freely about his galloping; the kindness of John Campbell, Surgeon, Aberdeen, that gentleman's

grandson, has enabled me to publish it for the first time—there is no date: but the allusion to the district of ten parishes gives the time.

"SIR,—I shall not fail to wait on Captain Riddel to-night—I wish and pray that the Goddess of Justice herself would appear to-morrow among our Hon. Gentlemen, merely to give them a word in their ear that, 'mercy to the thief is injustice to the honest man.' For my part I have galloped over my ten parishes these four days, until this moment that I am just alighted, or rather, that my poor jackass-skeleton of a horse has let me down; for the miserable devil has been on his knees half a score of times within the last twenty miles, telling me in his own way, 'Behold, am not I thy faithful jade of a horse, on which thou hast ridden these many years!' In short, Sir, I have broke my horse's wind, and almost broke my own neck, besides some injuries in a part that shall be nameless, owing to a hard hearted stone for a saddle. I find that every offender has so many great men to espouse his cause that I shall not be surprised if I am committed to the stronghold of the law to-morrow, for insolence to the dear friends of the gentlemen of the county.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obliged and obedient humble,

"ROBERT BURNS."

TO

ROBERT GRAHAM, ESQ.,

OF FINTRAY,

ON RECEIVING A FAVOUR.

I CALL no goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled muse may suit a bard that feigns;
Friend of my life! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver, you.

Thou orb of day! thou other paler light!
And all ye many sparkling stars of night;
If aught that giver from my mind efface;
If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace;
Then roll to me, along your wandering spheres,
Only to number out a villain's years!

Robert Graham of Fintray has the merit of doing all that was done for Burns in the way of raising him out of the toiling humility of his condition, and enabling him to serve the muse without dread of want. Fintray had, indeed, little in his power; but he exercised his power willingly, and not only obtained the Poet an appointment in the Excise, but was instrumental in removing him to a district requiring less personal exertion. Nor should it be forgotten that he defended him with obstinate eloquence when imputations were thrown upon his loyalty. These verses were written on receiving the favour which the previous epistle prayed for.

A VISION.

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
  Where the wa'-flower scents the dewy air,
Where th' howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
  And tells the midnight moon her care ;

The winds were laid, the air was still,
  The stars they shot alang the sky ;
The fox was howling on the hill,
  And the distant-echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its hazelly path,
  Was rushing by the ruin'd wa's,
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,*
  Whose distant roaring swells and fa's.

The cauld blue north was streaming forth
  Her lights, wi' hissing eerie din ;
Athort the lift they start and shift,
  Like fortune's favours, tint as win.

Variation. To join yon river on the Strath.

By heedless chance I turn'd mine eyes,
And, by the moonbeam, shook to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
Attir'd as minstrels wont to be.*

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His darin' look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain,
The sacred posy—'Libertie!'

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might rous'd the slumb'ring dead to hear;
But, oh! it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear.

He sang wi' joy the former day,
He weeping wail'd his latter times;
But what he said it was nae play,—
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.

To the splendid vision of Liberty which Burns evoked among the ruins of old Lincluden, he was, perhaps, afraid of giving a song in character—the words might have been otherwise than pleasing to those who then held rule in the land. An imperfect copy of this noble poem was printed in Johnson's "Musical Museum," burthened at

* *Variation.* Now looking over firth and fauld,
Her horn the pale-fac'd Cynthia rear'd;
When, lo, in form of minstrel auld,
A stern and stalwart ghaist appear'd.

the close of every verse with a chorus, which interrupted the sentiment:—

> "A lassie all alone,
> Was making her moan,
> Lamenting our lads beyond the sea;
> In the bloody wars they fa',
> And our honour's gane and a',
> And broken-hearted we maun die."

The scene is chiefly copied from nature: but the wall-flower and the ivy, the distant roaring of the Nith, and the fox howling on the hill, seem rather to point to Sweetheart Abbey. Lincluden was a favourite resort of the Poet; and, indeed, a lovelier spot, or one more suitable for meditation, cannot well be imagined.—"To the south," says John Macdiarmid, in his pleasing account of the place, "appears the ancient town of Dumfries, distant little more than a mile, the spires of which are seen, and the chime of its bells distinctly heard: the Clouden laves the banks of what must have formed part of the Abbey garden, and, at a point within view, ends its pilgrimage as a separate stream, by murmuring placidly into the bed of the Nith. Beneath is a fertile haugh or holm, bounded by the newly united streams around: pointing to the south-east, are the remains of a bowling-green and flower-garden, the parterres and scrolls of which were visible in 1789; and beyond, an artificial mount, with its spiral walk, turf seat, and tufted trees, once the favourite resort of nuns and monks, and affording a delightful prospect of the surrounding country."

Lincluden was founded by one of the Lords of Galloway in the reign of Malcolm the Fourth—very richly endowed, and tenanted till the year 1400 by Benedictine nuns. The licentious manners of those ladies so exasperated Archibald Douglas, surnamed The Grim, that he turned them out, and changed it to a college, with

a provost and twelve bedesmen. The structure was once a noble one—the ruins are still majestic. It measured 162 feet from north to south, 116 from east to west, and its principal tower rose 100 feet in height. The style is pure Gothic; the choir was rich in carving and sculpture: the roof was treble, and the corbels, from which the ribs of the arches sprung, were grotesquely cut into heads or shields. The beauty of the whole, however, is greatly impaired by the rubbish which chokes up the interior. This may be removed without danger, and were the top of the walls covered with thin freestone, or slate, it would keep the rain from soaking through the joints, and destroying the solid masonry. Marmaduke Constable Maxwell, to whom Lincluden belongs, should think of this; he cannot do a more acceptable action: let him not, however, attempt restoration.

TO

JOHN MAXWELL OF TERRAUGHTY,

ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

HEALTH to the Maxwell's vet'ran chief!
Health, ay unsour'd by care or grief:
Inspir'd, I turn'd Fate's sybil leaf
This natal morn ;
I see thy life is stuff o' prief,
Scarce quite half worn.

This day thou metes three score eleven,
And I can tell that bounteous Heaven
(The second sight, ye ken, is given
To ilka Poet)
On thee a tack o' seven times seven
Will yet bestow it.

If envious buckies view wi' sorrow
Thy lengthen'd days on this blest morrow,
May desolation's lang teeth'd harrow,
Nine miles an hour,
Rake them like Sodom and Gomorrah,
In brunstane stoure—

But for thy friends, and they are mony,
Baith honest men and lasses bonnie,

May couthie fortune, kind and cannie,
In social glee,
Wi' mornings blythe and e'enings funny
Bless them and thee!

Fareweel, auld birkie! Lord be near ye,
And then the Deil he daur na steer ye:
Your friends ay love, your faes ay fear ye,
For me, shame fa' me,
If neist my heart I dinna wear ye
While BURNS they ca' me!

John Maxwell of Terraughty and Munshes, to whom these verses are addressed, was one of the most remarkable men of his day. He was descended from the earls of Nithsdale: he shared also in the blood of the house of Herries: but he cared little about lineage, and claimed merit only from a judgment sound and clear—a knowledge of business which penetrated into all the concerns of life, and a skill in handling the most difficult subjects, which was considered unrivalled. He cared for no one's good word—he regarded no one's ill will—flattery and censure were alike lost on him: under an austere manner he hid much kindness of heart, and was in a fair way of doing an act of gentleness when he spoke sternly and peremptorily. He loved to meet Burns; not that he either cared for or comprehended poetry; but he was pleased with his knowledge of human nature, and with the keen and piercing remarks in which he indulged. The laird of Terraughty was seventy-one years old when these verses were written. He survived the Poet twenty years.

THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

AN OCCASIONAL ADDRESS SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE ON HER BENEFIT NIGHT.

While Europe's eye is fix'd on mighty things,
The fate of empires and the fall of kings;
While quacks of state must each produce his plan,
And even children lisp the Rights of Man;
Amid this mighty fuss just let me mention,
The Rights of Woman merit some attention.

First, in the sexes' intermixed connexion,
One sacred Right of Woman is protection.
The tender flower that lifts its head, elate,
Helpless, must fall before the blasts of fate,
Sunk on the earth, defac'd its lovely form,
Unless your shelter ward th' impending storm.

Our second right—but needless here is caution,
To keep that right inviolate's the fashion,
Each man of sense has it so full before him,
He'd die before he'd wrong it—'tis decorum.—
There was, indeed, in far less polish'd days,
A time, when rough rude man had naughty ways;
Would swagger, swear, get drunk, kick up a riot,
Nay even thus invade a lady's quiet.

Now, thank our stars! these Gothic times are fled;
Now, well-bred men—and you are all well-bred—
Most justly think (and we are much the gainers)
Such conduct neither spirit, wit nor manners.*

For Right the third, our last, our best, our dearest,
That right to fluttering female hearts the nearest,
Which even the Rights of Kings in low prostration
Most humbly own—'tis dear, dear admiration!
In that blest sphere alone we live and move;
There taste that life of life—immortal love.—
Smiles, glances, sighs, tears, fits, flirtations, airs,
'Gainst such an host what flinty savage dares—
When awful Beauty joins with all her charms,
Who is so rash as rise in rebel arms?

But truce with kings and truce with constitutions,
With bloody armaments and revolutions,
Let majesty your first attention summon,
Ah! ca ira! THE MAJESTY OF WOMAN!

Miss Fontenelle, for whom these verses were written, was one of Mr. Williamson's actresses; she was young and pretty, and indulged in levities both of speech and

* Ironical allusion to the Saturnalia of the Caledonian Hunt.

action. The Rights of Man had been advocated by Paine; the Rights of Woman had been urged with earnest vehemence by Mary Wolstonecroft, and nothing was talked of but moral and political regeneration. The Poet, with some skill, availed himself of the ruling sentiment of the time, and made the actress claim protection for the merits of tender, helpless woman—protection decorously bestowed, unaccompanied by rudeness. The address, one told me who was present, was well received by the audience; the ironical allusion to the annual Saturnalia of the Caledonian Hunt, was understood, and when reprehended by a solitary hiss or two, was rapturously applauded by pit and galleries.

The public mind was then in a yeasty state, and very easily moved: the line—

"But truce with kings, and truce with constitutions,"

was caught eagerly up, and had some sharp disapprobation bestowed on it, till the happy turn of the succeeding lines restored harmony.

MONODY,

ON A LADY FAMED FOR HER CAPRICE.

How cold is that bosom which folly once fired,
How pale is that cheek where the rouge lately glisten'd!
How silent that tongue which the echoes oft tired,
How dull is that ear which to flattery so listen'd!

If sorrow and anguish their exit await,
From friendship and dearest affection remov'd;
How doubly severer, Maria, thy fate,
Thou diedst unwept as thou livedst unlov'd.

Loves, Graces, and Virtues, I call not on you;
So shy, grave, and distant, ye shed not a tear:
But come, all ye offspring of Folly so true,
And flowers let us cull for Maria's cold bier.

We'll search through the garden for each silly flower,
We'll roam through the forest for each idle weed;
But chiefly the nettle, so typical, shower,
For none e'er approach'd her but rued the rash deed.

We'll sculpture the marble, we'll measure the lay;
Here Vanity strums on her idiot lyre;
There keen Indignation shall dart on her prey,
Which spurning Contempt shall redeem from his ire.

THE EPITAPH.

Here lies, now a prey to insulting neglect,
What once was a butterfly, gay in life's beam:
Want only of wisdom, denied her respect,
Want only of goodness, denied her esteem.

In this sharp lampoon, Burns satirizes a lady, young, beautiful, much of a wit, and something of a poetess—Mrs. Riddel of Woodlee-Park, now Goldielee. How she incurred his displeasure has been variously related: the all but general opinion is, that she smiled on those whom the Poet contemptuously called "epauletted coxcombs," more than he thought respectful to his own deserts, and he was not one likely to let neglect pass unnoticed. The copy of this lampoon, which Burns sent to John M'Murdo of Drumlanrig, is now before me: the name is written Maria, it differs in nothing save a single word from the common copy. The lady lived to forgive and forget the bitterness of the Bard: she had a fine library and lent him books; she was a fair scholar and sometimes translated from French or Italian, or Latin verse for his amusement, nor was she unwilling to write rhymes, and it must be confessed that she sometimes merited praise both for harmony and elegance. In the Inscription which she wrote for a hermitage in one of

the West India isles, of which she was a native, there are many pretty lines :—

"Soon as Aurora wakes the dawn,
I press with nimble feet the lawn,
Eager to deck the favourite bower,
With every opening bud and flower;
Explore each shrub and balmy sweet,
To scatter o'er my mossy seat;
And teach around in wreaths to stray,
The rich pomegranates pliant spray;
At noon reclined in yonder glade,
Panting beneath the tamarind's shade;
Or where the palm-trees nodding head,
Guards from the sun my verdant bed.
I quaff to slake my thirsty soul,
The cocoa's full nectareous bowl.
At eve beneath some spreading tree,
I read the inspired poesie
Of Milton, Pope, or Spenser mild,
And Shakspeare, Fancy's brightest child;
To tender Sterne I lend an ear,
Or drop o'er Héloise the tear:
Sometimes with Anna tune the lay,
And doze in song the cheerful day."

That Mrs. Riddel lamented deeply the death of Burns, we have other evidence than the following verses, dated Nithside, 1796; which point to his grave :—

"Despairing I rove by this still running stream,
While Coila's sad fate is for ever my theme;
For 'twas here we oft wander'd the long summer days,
And each vale *then* harmonious re-echoed his lays;
The woods with delight bowed their tops to his song,
While the streamlet responsive ran murmuring along:
The songsters were mute when he tuned his soft reed,
And fays danc'd round on the green chequer'd mead."

EPISTLE

FROM

ESOPUS TO MARIA.

From those drear solitudes and frowsy cells,
Where infamy with sad repentance dwells;
Where turnkeys make the jealous portal fast,
And deal from iron hands the spare repast;
Where truant 'prentices, yet young in sin,
Blush at the curious stranger peeping in;
Where strumpets, relics of the drunken roar,
Resolve to drink, nay half to whore no more;
Where tiny thieves not destin'd yet to swing,
Beat hemp for others, riper for the string:
From these dire scenes my wretched lines I date,
To tell Maria her Esopus' fate.

"Alas! I feel I am no actor here!"
'Tis real hangmen, real scourges bear!
Prepare, Maria, for a horrid tale
Will turn thy very rouge to deadly pale;
Will make thy hair, tho' erst from gipsy polled,
By barber woven, and by barber sold,
Though twisted smooth with Harry's nicest care,
Like hoary bristles to erect and stare.

The hero of the mimic scene, no more
I start in Hamlet, in Othello roar;
Or haughty Chieftain, 'mid the din of arms,
In Highland bonnet woo Malvina's charms;
While sans culottes stoop up the mountain high,
And steal from me Maria's prying eye.
Blest Highland bonnet! Once my proudest dress,
Now prouder still, Maria's temples press.
I see her wave thy towering plumes afar,
And call each coxcomb to the wordy war.
I see her face the first of Ireland's sons,*
And even out-Irish his Hibernian bronze;
The crafty colonel † leaves the tartaned lines,
For other wars, where he a hero shines;
The hopeful youth, in Scottish senate bred,
Who owns a Bushby's heart without the head;
Comes, 'mid a string of coxcombs to display,
That veni, vidi, vici, is his way;
The shrinking bard adown an alley skulks,
And dreads a meeting worse than Woolwich hulks;
Though there, his heresies in church and state
Might well award him Muir and Palmer's fate:
Still she undaunted reels and rattles on,
And dares the public like a noontide sun.
(What scandal called Maria's janty stagger,
The ricket reeling of a crooked swagger?
Whose spleen e'en worse than BURNS' venom when
He dips in gall unmixed his eager pen,—

* Gillespie. † Col. M'Dowal.

And pours his vengeance in the burning line,
Who christened thus Maria's lyre divine ;
The idiot strum of vanity bemused,
And even th' abuse of poesy abused !
Who called her verse, a parish workhouse made
For motley, foundling fancies, stolen or strayed ?)

A workhouse ! ah, that sound awakes my woes,
And pillows on the thorn my rack'd repose !
In durance vile here must I wake and weep,
And all my frowzy couch in sorrow steep ;
That straw where many a rogue has lain of yore,
And vermined gipsies littered heretofore.

Why, Lonsdale thus, thy wrath on vagrants pour,
Must earth no rascal save thyself endure ?
Must thou alone in guilt immortal swell,
And make a vast monopoly of hell ?
Thou know'st, the virtues cannot hate thee worse,
The vices also, must they club their curse ?
Or must no tiny sin to others fall,
Because thy guilt's supreme enough for all ?

Maria, send me too thy griefs and cares ;
In all of thee sure thy Esopus shares.
As thou at all mankind the flag unfurls,
Who on my fair one satire's vengeance hurls ?
Who calls thee, pert, affected, vain coquette,
A wit in folly, and a fool in wit.

Who says, that fool alone is not thy due,
And quotes thy treacheries to prove it true?
Our force united on thy foes we'll turn,
And dare the war with all of woman born:
For who can write and speak as thou and I?
My periods that decyphering defy,
And thy still matchless tongue that conquers all reply.

The Esopus of this strange epistle was Williamson the actor, and the Maria to whom it is addressed was Mrs. Riddel. The actor we may leave in the obscurity to which men of indifferent talents sink, who

"In Hamlet start, or in Othello roar;"

but the lady merits no such oblivion, were it only for her having forgiven the Poet for his lampoons—and sincerer still, perhaps—written a sensible, clear, heart-warm account of him when laid in the grave. Nor did her kindness stop there; she stirred herself actively in promoting the welfare of his widow and children: she maintained a long correspondence with the eminent sculptor, Banks, respecting a proper memorial to the memory of Burns—on which she displayed much good sense and good feeling, and she communicated to Currie many traits of his character, and habits of composition.

Not a little of the man is visible in this poem: Burns sees nothing in the poetry of "Maria," but

"Motley foundling fancies, stolen or strayed;"

and he hears nothing in her conversation, save her

"Still matchless tongue, that conquers all reply."

The poem is printed from his manuscript.

POEM

ON PASTORAL POETRY

Hail Poesie! thou Nymph reserv'd!
In chase o' thee, what crowds hae swerv'd
Frae common sense, or sunk enerv'd
'Mang heaps o' clavers;
And och! o'er aft thy joes hae starv'd,
Mid a' thy favours!

Say, Lassie, why thy train amang,
While loud, the trump's heroic clang,
And sock or buskin skelp alang
To death or marriage;
Scarce ane has tried the shepherd-sang
But wi' miscarriage?

In Homer's craft Jock Milton thrives;
Eschylus' pen Will Shakspeare drives;
Wee Pope, the knurlin, 'till him rives
Horatian fame;
In thy sweet sang, Barbauld, survives
Even Sappho's flame.

But thee, Theocritus, wha matches?
They're no herd's ballats, Maro's catches;
Squire Pope but busks his skinklin patches
O' heathen tatters:
I pass by hunders, nameless wretches,
That ape their betters.

In this braw age o' wit and lear,
Will nane the Shepherd's whistle mair
Blaw sweetly in its native air
And rural grace;
And wi' the far-fam'd Grecian share
A rival place?

Yes! there is ane; a Scottish callan—
There's ane; come forgit, honest Allan!
Thou need na jouk behint the hallan,
A chiel sae clever;
The teeth o' time may gnaw Tantallan,
But thou's for ever!

Thou paints auld nature to the nines,
In thy sweet Caledonian lines;
Nae gowden stream thro' myrtles twines,
Where Philomel,
While nightly breezes sweeps the vines,
Her griefs will tell!

In gowany glens thy burnie strays,
Where bonnie lasses bleach their claes;
Or trots by hazelly shaws and braes,
Wi' hawthorns gray,
Where blackbirds join the shepherd's lays
At close o' day.

Thy rural loves are nature's sel';
Nae bombast spates o' nonsense swell;
Nae snap conceits, but that sweet spell
O' witchin' love;
That charm that can the strongest quell,
The sternest move.

This poem was found by Dr. Currie among the papers of the Poet, and in his hand-writing: but Gilbert Burns says—"There is some doubt of its being his." The second verse alone would go far to remove all doubts: the lines, too, which characterize the Pastorals of Pope, and the concluding stanza of the poem, bear the Burns' stamp, which no one has been successful in counterfeiting. It is much to be regretted that one who felt so well, and knew so much, refrained from composing a pastoral or rural drama: to this object some of his correspondents directed his attention, he mused on subject and scene—and did no more.

Burns found many counsellors: the most prudent was Telford, the eminent engineer, a native of Dumfriesshire, and a poet as well as a man of science. In a poem

of considerable merit, he pointed out several touching topics for the muse :—

"The parish-school—its curious site,
The master, who can clear indite,
And lead them on to count and write,
Demand thy care :
Nor pass the ploughman-school at night
Without a share.

"Nor yet the tentie curious lad,
Who o'er the ingle hangs his head,
And begs of neighbours books to read,
For hence arise
Thy country's sons, who far are spread,
Baith bauld and wise."

On Burns's death the land was deluged with pastoral lamentations for his loss : few of the rhymes merited preservation : yet to young memories poetry of a common kind will pertinaciously cling: I remember some lines which appeared at that time in print. Their truth is their chief beauty :—

"In waefu' notes, or in a canty sang,
He a' the bards o' Caledonia dang.
He was, I wat, a bauld undaunted chiel—
Safe me! he ev'n address'd the very de'il;
An' talked right gash an' free to grisly death,
An' then escaped his clutches free o' skaith :
But now, alake! he's caught him in his fangs:
But death will never, never seize his sangs
May nature's sel' the fate o' Burns bewail,
An' tears frae ilka e'e drap down like hail:
Thou sun, and moon, an' a' ye stars be dim,
O hide your rays in clouds, an' mourn for him!
Ye woods an' howes, an' ilka shady grove,
Where aft he pleasant sang o' you and love;
Ye tunefu' birds, o' every size and wing,
His dirge in solemn—solemn quaverings, sing!"

SONNET,

WRITTEN ON THE 25TH JANUARY, 1793, THE BIRTHDAY OF THE AUTHOR, ON HEARING A THRUSH SING IN A MORNING WALK.

Sing on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough,
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain,
See aged Winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blithe carol clears his furrow'd brow.

So in lone Poverty's dominion drear,
Sits meek Content with light unanxious heart,
Welcomes the rapid moments, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring ought to hope or fear.

I thank thee, Author of this opening day!
Thou whose bright sun now gilds yon orient skies!
Riches denied, thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give nor take away!

Yet come, thou child of poverty and care
The mite high Heaven bestowed, that mite with thee I'll share.

These lines were written opposite the College of Lincluden, close by the side of the Nith—the favourite

winter as well as summer resort of the Poet. In the summer he loved it, for then the ground was covered with daisies and wild hyacinths: the odour of the honeysuckle came from the thorn, and the song of the birds from the romantic groves which, as with a garland, enclose the ruins of Lincluden: and in the winter he loved to look on the mingling waters of the Cluden and Nith, see them swelling from bank to brae, bearing down trees they had rooted out, or sheets of ice which rains and thaws had loosened.

That Burns loved "Winter, with her angry howl," evidence may be almost every where found in his earlier poems. There was something of the farmer as well as the moralizing poet in this: labour was then almost at a stand; the plough was frozen up, the corn was stacked, and, probably thrashed and sold, and till spring came and pushed the ploughshare into the earth, the poet-farmer might indulge in his musings by leafless woods, through which the wind was howling, or by river-banks when the streams were red and raving; or give his fancy an airing during an interval of wind and rain, when a thrush—

> "Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree,"

came forth like himself to sing from "fulness of heart."

SONNET,

ON

THE DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL, ESQ.

OF GLENRIDDEL.

APRIL, 1794.

No more, ye warblers of the wood—no more!
Nor pour your descant, grating, on my soul:
Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant stole,
More welcome were to me grim Winter's wildest roar.

How can ye charm, ye flow'rs, with all your dyes?
Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend:
How can I to the tuneful strain attend?
That strain flows round th' untimely tomb where Riddel lies.

Yes, pour, ye warblers, pour the notes of woe!
And soothe the Virtues weeping on this bier:
The Man of Worth, and has not left his peer,
Is in his "narrow house" for ever darkly low.

Thee, Spring, again with joy shall others greet,
Me, mem'ry of my loss will only meet.

Robert Riddel, Esq. of Friar's-Carse, a very worthy character, and one to whom Burns thought himself under many obligations. It is a curious circumstance, that the two concluding lines express a sentiment exactly similar to one of the most beautiful passages in the "Pastor Fido," from the 7th to the 10th line of the Monologue, at the opening of the 3d Act: yet Burns had no acquaintance with Guarini's work. Feeling dictates to genius in all ages, and all countries, and her language must be often the same.

Riddel was one of those gentlemen who love to live on their own property, and unite the pursuits of literature with the improvement of their estates. He did more than this; he desired to augment the happiness and better the condition of his husbandmen and cotters, and also to spread knowledge among them. It is true that his dependants did not always appreciate his motives, or sympathize in his taste; he experienced to the full the vulgar prejudice entertained by the peasantry against all who indulge in antiquarian researches; the "queer stones and hog-troughs" collected by the Laird of Friar's-Carse were matters of merriment to his neighbours.

IMPROMPTU,

ON MRS. R——'S BIRTHDAY.

Old Winter, with his frosty beard,
Thus once to Jove his prayer preferr'd,—
What have I done of all the year,
To bear this hated doom severe?
My cheerless suns no pleasure know;
Night's horrid car drags, dreary slow;
My dismal months no joys are crowning,
But spleeny English, hanging, drowning.

Now, Jove, for once be mighty civil,
To counterbalance all this evil;
Give me, and I've no more to say,
Give me Maria's natal day!
That brilliant gift shall so enrich me,
Spring, summer, autumn, cannot match me;
'Tis done! says Jove; so ends my story,
And Winter once rejoic'd in glory.

Compliments such as these lines bestow, enabled Mrs. Riddel, to whom they were addressed, to endure with better grace the sarcastic verses "To a Lady famed for her Ca[illegible]e." It is said that she refrai[illegible]rom showing in any way the pain which the Poe[illegible]ious lampoons inflicted: she knew his nature, [illegible] the hour of reconciliation was nigh.

LIBERTY.

A FRAGMENT

Thee, Caledonia, thy wild heaths among,
Thee, famed for martial deed and sacred song,
To thee I turn with swimming eyes ;
Where is that soul of freedom fled ?
Immingled with the mighty dead !
Beneath the hallow'd turf where Wallace lies !
Hear it not, Wallace, in thy bed of death !
Ye babbling winds, in silence sweep ;
Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,
Nor give the coward secret breath.
Is this the power in freedom's war,
That wont to bid the battle rage ?
Behold that eye which shot immortal hate,
Crushing the despot's proudest bearing !

This was the commencement of a poem intended to commemorate the liberty which America had achieved for herself under Washington and Franklin. Fragmentary stanzas were numerous among the Poet's papers: —"The following lines," says Cromek, "were found on looking over his library, written with a pencil on a blank leaf prefixed to an edition of Collins' Poems. The

first part of the subject is wholly defaced, and the Poet does not seem to have written more than is here given. It is evidently a fragment of the drama of BRUCE, suggested by Lord Buchan, on the model of the "Masque of Alfred." This had ever been a favourite theme of Burns' muse, and he had transmitted to his lordship the epic song of "Bruce to his troops at Bannockburn," as earnest of his having commenced the undertaking. From so noble a specimen what might not have been expected! especially when we reflect that the subject is not only in itself a grand one, but perfectly in unison with the Poet's character and feelings :—

"* * * * * *
His royal visage seamed with many a scar,
That Caledonian reared his martial form,
Who led the tyrant-quelling war,
Where Bannockburn's ensanguined flood
Swelled with mingling hostile blood,
Soon Edward's myriads struck with deep dismay,
And Scotia's troop of brothers win their way.
(O, glorious deed to bay a tyrant's band!
O, heavenly joy to free our native land!)
While high their mighty chief poured on the doubling storm."

These lines are descriptive rather than dramatic : they could not possibly belong to the drama which Burns told Ramsay he intended to write, on Rob Macquechan's thrusting his awl three inches up Robert Bruce's heel, when he undertook to repair his boot.

VERSES

TO A YOUNG LADY.

HERE, where the Scottish muse immortal lives,
In sacred strains and tuneful numbers join'd,
Accept the gift;—tho' humble he who gives,
Rich is the tribute of the grateful mind.

So may no ruffian-feeling in thy breast,
Discordant jar thy bosom-chords among:
But peace attune thy gentle soul to rest,
Or love ecstatic wake his seraph song.

Or pity's notes in luxury of tears,
As modest want the tale of woe reveals;
While conscious virtue all the strain endears,
And heaven-born piety her sanction seals.

The Poet wrote these verses on the blank side of the title page of a copy of Thomson's Select Scottish Songs, and sent the volume in a present to the daughter of "a much honoured and much valued friend, Mr. Graham of Fintray." "It were to have been wished," says Currie, "that instead of 'ruffian feeling,' the bard had used a less rugged epithet—*e. g.* ruder."

THE VOWELS.

A TALE.

'TWAS where the birch and sounding thong are ply'd,
The noisy domicile of pedant pride;
Where ignorance her darkening vapour throws,
And cruelty directs the thickening blows;
Upon a time, Sir Abece the great,
In all his pedagogic powers elate,
His awful chair of state resolves to mount,
And call the trembling vowels to account.—

First enter'd A, a grave, broad, solemn wight,
But, ah! deform'd, dishonest to the sight!
His twisted head look'd backward on his way,
And flagrant from the scourge he grunted, *ai!*

Reluctant, E stalk'd in; with piteous race
The justling tears ran down his honest face!
That name, that well-worn name, and all his own,
Pale he surrenders at the tyrant's throne!
The Pedant stifles keen the Roman sound
Not all his mongrel diphthongs can compound;
And next the title following close behind,
He to the nameless, ghastly wretch assign'd.

The cobweb'd gothic dome resounded, Y!
In sullen vengeance, I, disdain'd reply:
The pedant swung his felon cudgel round,
And knock'd the groaning vowel to the ground!

In rueful apprehension enter'd O,
The wailing minstrel of despairing woe;
Th' Inquisitor of Spain the most expert,
Might there have learnt new mysteries of his art;
So grim, deform'd, with horrors entering U,
His dearest friend and brother scarcely knew!

As trembling U stood staring all aghast,
The pedant in his left hand clutch'd him fast,
In helpless infants' tears he dipp'd his right,
Baptiz'd him *eu*, and kick'd him from his sight.

The kindness of Mr. Laidlaw, Depute Sheriff-Clerk of Berwickshire, has enabled me to add a characteristic note to this odd poem. The following, described by Burns as "Literary Scolding and Hints," forms part of a letter sent to a critic who had taken him to task about obscure language and imperfect grammar:—

"Thou eunuch of language: thou Englishman, who never was south the Tweed: thou servile echo of fashionable barbarisms: thou quack, vending the nostrums of empirical elocution: thou marriage-maker between vowels and consonants, on the Gretna-green of caprice: thou cobbler, botching the flimsy socks of bombast oratory: thou blacksmith, hammering the rivets of ab-

surdity: thou butcher, embruing thy hands in the bowels of orthography: thou arch-heretic in pronunciation: thou pitch-pipe of affected emphasis: thou carpenter, mortising the aukward joints of jarring sentences: thou squeaking dissonance of cadence: thou pimp of gender: thou Lyon Herald to silly etymology: thou antipode of grammar: thou executioner of construction: thou brood of the speech-distracting builders of the Tower of Babel: thou lingual confusion worse confounded: thou scape-gallows from the land of syntax: thou scavenger of mood and tense: thou murderous accoucheur of infant learning: thou *ignis fatuus*, misleading the steps of benighted ignorance: thou pickle-herring in the puppet-show of nonsense: thou faithful recorder of barbarous idiom: thou persecutor of syllabication: thou baleful meteor, foretelling and facilitating the rapid approach of Nox and Erebus." The Poet might have exclaimed during this fit of scolding "O for breath to utter!"

VERSES

TO JOHN RANKINE.

Ae day, as Death, that grusome carl,
Was driving to the tither warl'
A mixtie-maxtie motley squad,
And mony a guilt-bespotted lad;
Black gowns of each denomination,
And thieves of every rank and station,
From him that wears the star and garter,
To him that wintles in a halter:
Asham'd himsel' to see the wretches,
He mutters, glowrin' at the bitches,
"By G—d I'll not be seen behint them,
Nor 'mang the sp'ritual core present them,
Without, at least, ae honest man,
To grace this d—d infernal clan."
By Adamhill a glance he threw,
"L—d God!" quoth he, "I have it now,
There's just the man I want, i'faith!"
And quickly stoppit Rankine's breath.

The person to whom these lines refer was the "rough, rude, ready-witted Rankine" of Adamhill, and it is said they were suggested to Burns by the odd sarcastic dream

about his being refused admission to the infernal regions because he was one of Lord K—'s damned brutes! Cromek imagines, plausibly enough, that the first thought of the poem was suggested by Falstaff's account of his ragged recruits,—

"I'll not pass through Coventry with them, that's flat!"

This poem and some others of the same stamp have induced critics to say that the wit of Burns consisted in coarse railing, calling names, and profane swearing. There is, no doubt, much that is objectionable in his language: but the conception of his invective is generally original; death in the lines before us refuses to march his scoundrel victims into the other world

"Without, at least, ae honest man
To grace this d—d infernal clan."

And in the epigram on Grose, the devil is so astonished at the antiquarian's weight and rotundity, that he resolves to want him rather than strain himself with such a frightful load.

TO

MY DEAR AND MUCH HONOURED FRIEND,

MRS. DUNLOP,

OF DUNLOP.

ON SENSIBILITY.

Sensibility how charming,
  Thou, my friend, canst truly tell:
But distress with horrors arming,
  Thou hast also known too well!

Fairest flower, behold the lily,
  Blooming in the sunny ray:
Let the blast sweep o'er the valley,
  See it prostrate on the clay.

Hear the wood-lark charm the forest,
  Telling o'er his little joys:
Hapless bird! a prey the surest,
  To each pirate of the skies.

Dearly bought, the hidden treasure,
Finer feelings can bestow;
Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

The Poet one day received a letter from Mrs. Dunlop, of which some of the sentiments charmed him so much that he immediately wrote these verses on Sensibility, and sent them addressed as they now appear.

It was about this time that Burns became acquainted with the poetry of Cowper: he loved The Task so much that he carried a copy of it usually in his pocket:—"Now that I talk of authors," he says to Mrs. Dunlop, "how do you like Cowper; is not The Task a glorious poem? The religion of The Task, bating a few scraps of Calvinistic divinity, is the religion of God and Nature: the religion that exalts, that ennobles man."

LINES

SENT TO A GENTLEMAN WHOM HE HAD OFFENDED.

THE friend whom wild from wisdom's way,
The fumes of wine infuriate send;
(Not moony madness more astray;)
Who but deplores that hapless friend?

Mine was th' insensate frenzied part,
Ah, why should I such scenes outlive!
Scenes so abhorrent to my heart!
'Tis thine to pity and forgive.

"The insensate frenzied part," which the Poet intimates he had acted under the influence of wine, was at the too hospitable table of Mrs. Riddel: he was unsparing in speech, and on this occasion spoke of thrones and dominations, and "epauletted puppies" with a sarcastic vehemence offensive to many. These midnight quarrels, when the wine is lord of the ascendant, should be allowed to pass unless they are personal. Burns had suffered much, and was then suffering on account of his unbridled licence of speech: the power of utterance was not given to him that he might conceal his thoughts. The reparation offered in these lines was warmly accepted, and the current of friendship ran smooth as before.

ADDRESS,

SPOKEN BY MISS FONTENELLE ON HER BENEFIT-NIGHT.

Still anxious to secure your partial favour,
And not less anxious, sure, this night, than ever,
A Prologue, Epilogue, or some such matter,
'Twould vamp my bill, said I, if nothing better;
So sought a Poet, roosted near the skies,
Told him I came to feast my curious eyes;
Said, nothing like his works was ever printed;
And last, my Prologue-business slily hinted.
" Ma'am, let me tell you," quoth my man of rhymes
" I know your bent—these are no laughing times:
Can you—but, Miss, I own I have my fears,
Dissolve in pause—and sentimental tears
With laden sighs, and solemn-rounded sentence,
Rouse from his sluggish slumbers, fell Repentance;
Paint Vengeance as he takes his horrid stand,
Waving on high the desolating brand,
Calling the storms to bear him o'er a guilty land?"

I could no more—askance the creature eyeing,
D'ye think, said I, this face was made for crying?
I'll laugh, that's poz—nay more, the world shall know it;
And so, your servant! gloomy Master Poet!

Firm as my creed, Sirs, 'tis my fix'd belief,
That Misery's another word for Grief;
I also think—so may I be a bride!
That so much laughter, so much life enjoy'd.

Thou man of crazy care and ceaseless sigh,
Still under bleak Misfortune's blasting eye;
Doom'd to that sorest task of man alive—
To make three guineas do the work of five:
Laugh in Misfortune's face—the beldam witch!
Say, you'll be merry, tho' you can't be rich.

Thou other man of care, the wretch in love,
Who long with jiltish arts and airs hast strove;
Who, as the boughs all temptingly project,
Measur'st in desperate thought—a rope—thy neck—
Or, where the beetling cliff o'erhangs the deep,
Peerest to meditate the healing leap:
Would'st thou be cur'd, thou silly moping elf?
Laugh at her follies—laugh e'en at thyself:
Learn to despise those frowns now so terrific,
And love a kinder—that's your grand specific.

To sum up all, be merry, I advise;
And as we're merry, may we still be wise.

On the 4th of December, 1795, this address was spoken by Miss Fontenelle, at the Dumfries theatre.

Some of the audience who knew or guessed the poetic condition of the Bard's affairs sympathized in the lines on Misfortune :—

> "Thou man of crazy care and ceaseless sigh,
> Still under bleak Misfortune's blasting eye;
> Doomed to the sorest task of man alive—
> To make three guineas do the work of five."

At this time be it remembered that Burns had suffered much affliction in the loss of a favourite child, and from ill-health in his own person, and in his own words :—

> "In faith sma' heart had he to sing."

"We have had a brilliant theatre here this season," the Poet writes to Mrs. Dunlop; "only, as all other business does, it experiences a stagnation of trade from the epidemical complaint of the country, *want of cash*. I mention our theatre merely to lug in an Occasional Address which I wrote for the benefit night of one of the actresses."

ON

SEEING MISS FONTENELLE

IN A FAVOURITE CHARACTER.

Sweet naïveté of feature,
  Simple, wild, enchanting elf,
Not to thee, but thanks to nature,
  Thou art acting but thyself.

Wert thou awkward, stiff, affected,
  Spurning nature, torturing art;
Loves and graces all rejected,
  Then indeed thou'd'st act a part.

R. B.

Miss Hyslop of Dumfries—to whom these volumes are under other obligations than this—transmitted to the Editor these clever lines: the original in the Poet's own hand is still preserved. I know not to what character Burns alludes; but he was a person not easily pleased; he loved natural acting, such as we are not often favoured with.

TO CHLORIS.

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young, fair friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralizing muse.

Since thou, in all thy youth and charms,
Must bid the world adieu,
(A world 'gainst peace in constant arms)
To join the friendly few.

Since thy gay morn of life o'ercast,
Chill came the tempest's lower;
(And ne'er misfortune's eastern blast
Did nip a fairer flower.)

Since life's gay scenes must charm no more,
Still much is left behind;
Still nobler wealth hast thou in store—
The comforts of the mind!

Thine is the self-approving glow,
On conscious honour's part;
And, dearest gift of heaven below,
Thine friendship's truest heart.

The joys refin'd of sense and taste,
With every muse to rove:
And doubly were the poet blest,
These joys could he improve.

Of the lady of these lines we shall have occasion to speak when we come to the lyrical compositions of Burns: her poetic elevation is great, but her real situation calls for our sympathy. These lines were written on the blank leaf of a copy of his poems, and presented to Chloris; she retained the volume long, and prized it much: nor was she insensible of the light which the muse shed around her. That she did not seem so lovely in the sight of others as in the eyes of Burns, is well known; but the Poet looked not at bloom alone; he had something of the taste of an artist: he admired the elegance of her form, the harmony of her motion as she danced, and the sweetness of her voice.

POETICAL INSCRIPTION

FOR AN ALTAR TO INDEPENDENCE.

Thou of an independent mind,
With soul resolv'd, with soul resign'd;
Prepar'd Power's proudest frown to brave,
Who wilt not be, nor have a slave;
Virtue alone who dost revere,
Thy own reproach alone dost fear,
Approach this shrine, and worship here.

Heron of Kerroughtree, at whose seat in Galloway the altar stood on which these lines were inscribed was one of those friends whom the Poet's politics rather than genius procured. It was the fashion of those feverish times to raise altars to Freedom, and plant trees to Liberty even one of our ablest sculptors audaciously modelled a monarch, offered up as a sacrifice, on the altar of independence. Burns wrote the inscription during the summer of 1795; Heron was about to engage in an election contest, and these noble verses of the Poet served as an advertisement of the candidate's sentiments concerning freedom—a subject which was then fiercely agitating the earth.

THE HERON BALLADS.

[BALLAD FIRST.]

I.

Whom will you send to London town,
To Parliament and a' that?
Or wha in a' the country round
The best deserves to fa' that?
For a' that, and a' that,
Thro' Galloway and a' that;
Where is the laird or belted knight
That best deserves to fa' that?

II.

Wha sees Kerroughtree's open yett,
And wha is't never saw that?
Wha ever wi' Kerroughtree meets
And has a doubt of a' that?
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that;
The independent patriot,
The honest man, an' a' that.

III.

Tho' wit and worth in either sex,
St. Mary's Isle can shaw that;
Wi' dukes an' lords let Selkirk mix,
And weel does Selkirk fa' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
The independent commoner
Shall be the man for a' that.

IV.

But why should we to nobles jouk,
And its against the law that;
For why, a lord may be a gouk
Wi' ribbon, star, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A lord may be a lousy loun,
Wi' ribbon, star, an' a' that.

V.

A beardless boy comes o'er the hills,
Wi' uncle's purse an' a' that;
But we'el hae ane frae 'mang oursels,
A man we ken, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
For we're not to be bought an' sold
Like naigs, an' nowt, an' a' that.

VI.

Then let us drink the Stewartry,
Kerroughtree's laird, an' a' that,
Our representative to be,
For weel he's worthy a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A House of Commons such as he,
They would be blest that saw that.

This is the first of several songs which Burns wrote to serve Patrick Heron of Kerroughtree, in two elections, in which he was opposed, first by Gordon of Balmaghie, and secondly by the Hon. Montgomery Stewart. They are known to the peasantry by the name of the "Heron Ballads." The Poet seems at first to have contemplated some such harmless and laughable effusions as those which he wrote on Miller's election. The first ballad, now published through the kindness of Mr. King of Glasgow, is gentle and moderate: it is a song of eulogium on Heron—not of reproof to his opposers. These ballads were printed at the time on one side of a sheet, and widely disseminated over the country: they were understood merely as election squibs, and none of the gentlemen lampooned looked otherwise upon them than as productions of poetic art. In this spirit they are included now in the Poet's works and the Editor feels persuaded that some will smile and none be displeased.

THE

HERON BALLADS.

[BALLAD SECOND.]

THE ELECTION.

I.

Fy, let us a' to Kirkcudbright,
  For there will be bickerin' there;
For Murray's light-horse are to muster,
  And O, how the heroes will swear!
An' there will be Murray commander,
  And Gordon the battle to win;
Like brothers they'll stand by each other,
  Sae knit in alliance an' kin.

II.

An' there will be black-lippit Johnnie,
  The tongue o' the trump to them a';
An he get na hell for his haddin'
  The deil gets na justice ava';
An' there will be Kempleton's birkie,
  A boy no sae black at the bane,
But, as for his fine nabob fortune,
  We'el e'en let the subject alane.

III.

An' there will be Wigton's new sheriff,
Dame Justice fu' brawlie has sped,
She's gotten the heart of a Bushby,
But, Lord, what's become o' the head?
An' there will be Cardoness. Esquire,
Sae mighty in Cardoness' eyes;
A wight that will weather damnation,
For the devil the prey will despise.

IV.

An' there will be Douglasses doughty,
New christ'ning towns far and near;
Abjuring their democrat doings,
By kissing the — o' a peer;
An' there will be Kenmure sae gen'rous,
Whose honour is proof to the storm,
To save them from stark reprobation,
He lent them his name to the firm.

V.

But we winna mention Redcastle,
The body e'en let him escape!
He'd venture the gallows for siller,
An' 'twere na the cost o' the rape.
An' where is our king's lord lieutenant,
Sae fam'd for his gratefu' return?
The billie is gettin' his questions,
To say in St. Stephen's the morn.

VI.

An' there will be lads o' the gospel,
  Muirhead wha's as gude as he's true;
An' there will be Buittle's apostle,
  Wha's more o' the black than the blue;
An' there will be folk from St. Mary's,
  A house o' great merit and note,
The deil ane but honours them highly,—
  The deil ane will gie them his vote!

VII.

An' there will be wealthy young Richard,
  Dame Fortune should hing by the neck:
For prodigal, thriftless, bestowing,
  His merit had won him respect:
An' there will be rich brother nabobs,
  Tho' nabobs yet men of the first,
An' there will be Collieston's whiskers,
  An' Quintin, o' lads not the worst.

VIII.

An' there will be stamp-office Johnnie,
  Tak tent how ye purchase a dram;
An' there will be gay Cassencarrie,
  An' there will be gleg Colonel Tam;
An' there will be trusty Kerroughtree,
  Whose honour was ever his law,
If the virtues were packed in a parcel,
  His worth might be sample for a'.

IX.

An' can we forget the auld major,
  Wha'll ne'er be forgot in the Greys,
Our flatt'ry we'll keep for some other,
  Him only 'tis justice to praise.
An' there will be maiden Kilkerran,
  And also Barskimming's gude knight,
An' there will be roarin' Birtwhistle,
  Wha, luckily roars in the right.

X.

An' there, frae the Niddisdale's borders,
  Will mingle the Maxwells in droves;
Teugh Johnnie, staunch Geordie, an' Walie,
  That griens for the fishes an' loaves;
An' there will be Logan Mac Douall,
  Sculdudd'ry an' he will be there,
An' also the wild Scot of Galloway,
  Sodgerin', gunpowder Blair.

XI.

Then hey the chaste interest o' Broughton,
  An' hey for the blessings 'twill bring!
It may send Balmaghie to the Commons,
  In Sodom 'twould make him a king;
An' hey for the sanctified M——y,
  Our land who wi' chapels has stor'd;
He founder'd his horse among harlots,
  But gied the auld naig to the Lord.

The election had taken a serious turn against Heron, when Burns wrote ballad second: the verses are severe in most instances, and in some parts venomous: worthier men than several of those lampooned were not then alive, but he desired to help his friend and regarded not what weapons he used provided they were sharp. The names of those who figure in the lampoon are before me, but they are sufficiently plain in the song to those who reside in "Green Galloway," and require no farther emblazonment: while to the world at large, no explanation could give light to purely provincial things—the interpretation would be as dark as the text. Suffice it to say, that the gentlemen named were the most active canvassers on both sides; praise is lavished on the adherents of Heron; satiric abuse is bestowed on the friends of the Gordon. In another ballad—a sort of parody on "The Life and Age of Man," the Poet turns with fierce indignation on John Bushby of Tinwald-downs: a man of great natural talents, and makes him pour forth his lamentation:—

"'Twas in the seventeen hundred year
O' Christ and ninety-five,
That year I was the saddest man,
Of any man alive.
In March the three and twentieth day,
The sun raise clear and bright,
But O, I was a woeful man,
Ere toofa' of the night.

Yerl Galloway lang did rule the land,
Wi' equal right an' fame;
And thereto was his kinsman joined,
The Murray's noble name.
Yerl Galloway lang did rule the land,
Made me the judge o' strife;
But now Yerl Galloway's sceptre's broke,
And eke my hangman's knife."

The succeeding verses of the "Lamentation" are too personal for insertion.

THE

HERON BALLADS.

[BALLAD THIRD.]

AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG.

Tune.—"*Buy broom besoms.*"

WHA will buy my troggin,
Fine election ware;
Broken trade o' Broughton,
A' in high repair.
Buy braw troggin,
Frae the banks o' Dee;
Wha wants troggin
Let him come to me.

There's a noble Earl's
Fame and high renown,
For an auld sang—
Its thought the gudes were stown.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth o' Broughton
In a needle's ee;
Here's a reputation
Tint by Balmaghie.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's an honest conscience
Might a prince adorn ;
Frae the downs o' Tinwald—
So was never worn.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's its stuff and lining,
Cardoness' head ;
Fine for a sodger
A' the wale o' lead.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's a little wadset
Buittles scrap o' truth,
Pawn'd in a gin-shop
Quenching holy drouth.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's armorial bearings
Frae the manse o' Urr ;
The crest, an auld crab-apple
Rotten at the core.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here is Satan's picture,
Like a bizzard gled,
Pouncing poor Redcastle
Sprawlin' as a taed.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth and wisdom
Collieston can boast;
By a thievish midge
They had been nearly lost.
Buy braw troggin, &c,

Here is Murray's fragments
O' the ten commands;
Gifted by black Jock
To get them aff his hands.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Saw ye e'er sic troggin?
If to buy ye're slack,
Hornie's turnin' chapman,—
He'll buy a' the pack.
Buy braw troggin
Frae the banks o' Dee;
Wha wants troggin
Let him come to me.

This third and last ballad refers to the contest between Heron and Stewart: the former was successful on the hustings, but was unseated by a Committee of the Commons, and took the disappointment so much to heart, that he died—some say by his own hands—on his way back to Scotland. It was one of the dreams of his day, in which Burns indulged, that, by some miraculous movement, the Tory counsellors of the king would be

dismissed, and the Whigs, with the Prince of Wales at their head, rule and reign in their stead. That Heron aided in strengthening this "devout imagination" is certain: but then the laird of Kerroughtree was the victim of the delusion himself—the faith for which a man dies he must feel sincerely. All explanation of names is avoided, for the reasons already assigned. The Editor has been bold—he hopes not too bold. To those who urge him—and such have not been wanting—to give Burns as he found him he may make answer in the Poet's own, and hitherto unprinted, words:—

"Many verses on which an author would by no means rest his reputation in print, may yet amuse an idle moment in manuscript; and many poems, from the locality of the subject, may be unentertaining or unintelligible to those who are strangers to that locality. Most of, if not all, the following poems, are in one or other of these predicaments, and the author begs, into whose hands they may fall, that they will do him the justice not to publish what he himself thought proper to suppress. --R. B." These remarkable words are on the first page of a manuscript collection of the poems which Burns wrote in Ellisland: his meaning must not be interpreted too strictly: "Tam o' Shanter," and the "Inscription on Friar's-Carse Hermitage," are among them.

POEM,

ADDRESSED TO MR. MITCHELL, COLLECTOR OF EXCISE,

DUMFRIES, 1796.

FRIEND of the Poet, tried and leal,
Wha, wanting thee, might beg or steal;
Alake, alake, the meikle deil
Wi' a' his witches
Are at it, skelpin' jig and reel,
In my poor pouches!

I modestly fu' fain wad hint it,
That one pound one, I sairly want it;
If wi' the hizzie down ye sent it,
It would be kind;
And while my heart wi' life-blood dunted
I'd bear't in mind.

So may the auld year gang out moaning
To see the new come laden, groaning,
Wi' double plenty o'er the loanin
To thee and thine;
Domestic peace and comforts crowning
The hale design.

POSTSCRIPT.

YE'VE heard this while how I've been licket,
And by fell death was nearly nicket;
Grim loon! he got me by the fecket,
And sair me sheuk;
But by guid luck I lap a wicket,
And turn'd a neuk.

But by that health, I've got a share o't,
And by that life, I'm promised mair o't,
My hale and weel I'll tak a care o't,
A tentier way:
Then farewell folly, hide and hair o't
For ance and aye!

In this modest and affecting way Burns reminded his superior officer that he was a poor man, suffering from ill health, and that his salary then due would be very acceptable. Collector Mitchell was a kind and generous man, and befriended the Poet on many occasions; but he was not aware that

"Hungry ruin had him in the wind,"

or that his family were enduring privations such as preyed with double force on the sensitive and feeling heart of Burns.

TO

MISS JESSY LEWARS,

DUMFRIES,

WITH BOOKS WHICH THE BARD PRESENTED HER.

Thine be the volumes, Jessy fair,
And with them take the Poet's prayer;
That fate may in her fairest page,
With every kindliest, best presage,
Of future bliss enrol thy name:
With native worth, and spotless fame,
And wakeful caution still aware
Of ill—but chief, man's felon snare;
All blameless joys on earth we find,
And all the treasures of the mind—
These be thy guardian and reward;
So prays thy faithful friend, The Bard.

Miss Jessy Lewars, as has been related in the Poet's life, watched over him and his little household during his declining days with all the affectionate reverence of a daughter. For this she has received the silent thanks of all who admire the genius of Burns, or look with sorrow on his setting sun; she has received more—the undying thanks of the Poet himself: his songs to her honour, and his simple gifts of books and verse, will keep her name and fame long in the world.

POEM ON LIFE,

ADDRESSED TO

COLONEL DE PEYSTER,

DUMFRIES, 1796.

My honoured colonel, deep I feel
Your interest in the Poet's weal:
Ah! now sma' heart hae I to speel
        The steep Parnassus,
Surrounded thus by bolus pill,
        And potion glasses.

O what a canty warld were it,
Would pain and care, and sickness spare it;
And fortune favour worth and merit,
        As they deserve!
(And aye a rowth, roast beef and claret;
        Syne, wha wad starve?)

Dame Life, tho' fiction out may trick her,
And in paste gems and frippery deck her;
Oh! flickering, feeble, and unsicker
        I've found her still,
Ay wavering like the willow-wicker,
        'Tween good and ill.

Then that curst carmagnole, auld Satan,
Watches, like baudrons by a rattan,
Our sinfu' saul to get a claut on
Wi' felon ire ;
Syne, whip! his tail ye'll ne'er cast saut on—
He's aff like fire.

Ah Nick! ah Nick! it is na fair,
First shewing us the tempting ware,
Bright wines and bonnie lasses rare,
To put us daft ;
Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare
O' hell's damn'd waft.

Poor man, the flie, aft bizzes bye,
And aft as chance he comes thee nigh,
Thy auld damn'd elbow yeuks wi' joy,
And hellish pleasure ;
Already in thy fancy's eye,
Thy sicker treasure!

Soon heels-o'er-gowdie! in he gangs,
And like a sheep head on a tangs,
Thy girning laugh enjoys his pangs
And murd'ring wrestle,
As, dangling in the wind, he hangs
A gibbet's tassel.

But lest you think I am uncivil,
To plague you with this draunting drivel,
Abjuring a' intentions evil,
I quat my pen:
The Lord preserve us frae the devil!
Amen! amen!

Arentz de Peyster, Colonel of the Gentleman Volunteers of Dumfries, was a rigid disciplinarian: he had distinguished himself during the colonial war in America, and defended Detroit against the united efforts of the Indians and Republicans. He was regarded by many as a person harsh and stern: but this belonged rather to his manners than to his heart. Save that he wrote indifferent rhymes, he was in every respect a soldier. He thought the science of war the noblest of all sciences; a parade day the most glorious of all days, save that of victory: and a soldier, in the words of Prior,—

"No godhead but the first of men."

His voice was rough and commanding; his eye brightened up whenever he looked along the glittering ranks which he ruled; he forgot that he was eighty years old, and

"Bold, soldier-featured, undismayed,
He strode along."

This good old soldier befriended the Poet as far as the Poet would permit; for Burns was not without friends in his last moments. His cousin, James Burness of Montrose, not only sent by return of post ten pounds, the loan of which the dying Bard requested, but sent more

after his death, and offered to take his eldest son into his house and educate him like one of his own children. This should have been told in the Life, but the author was ignorant till lately of a fact which he would have had much pleasure in relating. The letters will be given in the proper place.

EPITAPHS, EPIGRAMS,

ETC. ETC.

THE epigrams of Burns are numerous: they are sharp and personal, and partake of the character of the natural rather than the artificial man. They abound in no polished inferences, elegant implications, or courteous insinuations. He differs from other wits of his time; and, because he does so, his invective has been pronounced harsh and acrimonious, and his sarcasms coarse and savage. He is not indeed one of those who

"Hint a fault and hesitate dislike."

He grapples at once with his enemy and prostrates him, not so much by science as by robust strength. In polished life it has been said that hostility is delicate and generous: that courtesy forbids us to strike the defenceless or to mangle the slain, and that when tried by this standard the epigrams and lam-

poons of Burns will appear offensive from their extreme coarseness and violence, and contemptible from their want of wit and brilliancy. It might have been objected with more propriety that his wit sometimes inclines to the profane, and that his humour deals too much in scriptural allusions.

I.

ON THE AUTHOR'S FATHER.

O YE whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
 Draw near with pious rev'rence and attend!
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
 The tender father and the gen'rous friend.
The pitying heart that felt for human woe;
 The dauntless heart that feared no human pride;
The friend of man, to vice alone a foe;
 "For ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side."

William Burness merited his eminent son's eulogiums; early suffering made him somewhat austere, and a consciousness of declining strength and sinking fortunes hindered him from mixing much in the world's mirth; but he set his children an example of piety, patience and fortitude, and deserves to be named whenever humble worth is remembered.

II.

ON R. A., Esq.

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much lov'd, much honour'd name!
(For none that knew him need be told)
A warmer heart death ne'er made cold.

The R. A. of this epitaph was Robert Aiken, Esq., the gentleman to whom the "Cotter's Saturday Night" is addressed—one of the Poet's earliest patrons. He was so anxious to make his friend's merits known, that wherever he went he recited his witty or serious poems, with so much taste and effect, that Burns said "I was unknown, Sir, till you read me into reputation."

III.

ON A FRIEND.

An honest man here lies at rest
As e'er God with his image blest!
The friend of man, the friend of truth;
The friend of age, and guide of youth;

Few hearts like him with virtue warm'd,
Few heads with knowledge so inform'd:
If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

This is one of those works which Johnson calls an epitaph to let. The name of the individual is neither mentioned in it nor alluded to in any of the author's productions. This is the more to be regretted, for Burns seldom praised without reason.—"To no man," he observed in a note to John M'Murdo, "whatever his station in life, or his power to serve me, have I ever paid a compliment at the expense of truth."

IV.

FOR GAVIN HAMILTON.

The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blam'd:
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be sav'd or damn'd!

These lines allude to the persecution which Gavin Hamilton endured for riding on Sunday, and speaking irreverently in the presence of a clergyman. The church should be merciful in all frivolous matters; disputes about trifles tend to pull dignity down. The day is past for a minister being expelled from his kirk for writing a virtuous drama, or a hearer being rebuked for galloping on Sunday.

V.

ON WEE JOHNNY.

HIC JACET WEE JOHNNY.

Whoe'er thou art, O reader, know,
  That death has murder'd Johnny!
An' here his body lies fu' low—
  For saul he ne'er had ony.

"Wee Johnny" was John Wilson, printer of the Kilmarnock edition of the Poet's works. He was so unconscious of the worth of what he was working upon, that he doubted the success of the speculation, upon which Burns said he was a "silly saulless body," and wrote this sarcastic epitaph, which he printed without being aware that it was his own forlorn *hic jacet*. He had his revenge,—when Burns proposed a second edition Wee Johnny demurred, unless some "good man" would guarantee payment: Parker offered to do this at once.—"It is like you to offer," said the Poet, "and like me to refuse."

VI.

ON JOHN DOVE,

INNKEEPER, MAUCHLINE.

Here lies Johnny Pidgeon ;
What was his religion ?
Wha e'er desires to ken,
To some other warl'
Maun follow the carl,
For here Johnny Pidgeon had nane !

Strong ale was ablution—
Small beer, persecution,
A dram was *memento mori* ;
But a full flowing bowl
Was the saving his soul,
And port was celestial glory.

This person kept the Whitefoord Arms, at the entrance of the Cowgate in Mauchline. The honest landlord's religion is made out to be a comparative appreciation of his various liquors.

VII.

ON A WAG IN MAUCHLINE.

LAMENT him, Mauchline husbands a',
He aften did assist ye ;
For had ye staid whole weeks awa,
Your wives they ne'er had missed ye.
Ye Mauchline bairns, as on ye press
To school in bands thegither,
O tread ye lightly on this grass,—
Perhaps he was your father.

This laborious wag was James Smith, whose history has been related in the note to that exquisite epistle beginning "Dear Smith, the sleest pawkie thief!" He failed in all his speculations in Scotland, and emigrated and died in the West Indies.

VIII.

ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER.

HERE souter Hood in death does sleep ;—
To h—ll, if he's gane thither,
Satan, gie him thy gear to keep,
He'll haud it weel thegither.

This ruling elder was one of those who examined anxiously into the poetical delinquencies of Burns, and hoped to find that the spiritual artillery of the kirk could be levelled at profane rhymers. He got hold, it is said, of some indecorous verses, which in a mirthful moment had dropt from the pen of the Poet, and as he read them in the Session, he paused at every verse, exclaiming "A wild lad! a wild lad!"

IX.

ON A NOISY POLEMIC.

Below thir stanes lie Jamie's banes:
O Death, it's my opinion,
ne'er took such a bleth'rin' b—ch
to thy dark dominion!

This person's name is James Humphrey: he is by trade a mason, is now grown old and infirm, but loves to talk of Burns and of the warm debates between them on Effectual Calling and Free Grace. Cromek said that he found him at work in a quarry, with a fox-skin cap and wooden clogs on, and stirred him up to talk on devotional matters, which he did with a natural eloquence and a quick acuteness that surprised him.

X.

ON MISS JEAN SCOTT.

Oh! had each Scot of ancient times
  Been, Jeany Scott, as thou art,
The bravest heart on English ground
  Had yielded like a coward!

The young lady, the subject of these complimentary lines, dwelt in Ayr, and cheered the Poet not only with her sweet looks, but with her sweet voice. Tradition relates no more. The name of Stuart is sometimes substituted for Scott, but with little propriety, for the point is lost by the change.

XI.

ON A HENPECKED COUNTRY SQUIRE.

As father Adam first was fool'd,
  A case that's still too common,
Here lies a man a woman rul'd,
  The devil rul'd the woman.[1]

[1] The Poet was not satisfied with these lines—in a second attempt he varied the satire.

XII.

ON THE SAME.

O DEATH, had'st thou but spared his life,
Whom we this day lament,
We freely wad exchang'd the wife,
And a' been well content!

Ev'n as he is, cauld in his graf,
The swap we yet will do't;
Take thou the carlin's carcase aff,
Thou'se get the soul to boot.

He was not, however, satisfied with his second epigram on this parsimonious dame; he turned the matter over in his mind, brought in a little learning, and sharpened the point of his satire.

XIII.

ON THE SAME.

ONE Queen Artemisia, as old stories tell,
When depriv'd of her husband she loved so well,
In respect for the love and affection he'd shown her,
She reduc'd him to dust and she drank up the powder.

But Queen Netherplace, of a diff'rent complexion,
When call'd on to order the fun'ral direction,
Would have eat her dear lord, on a slender pretence,
Not to show her respect, but to save the expense.

All that seems necessary to be said of this sordid lady has been told by the Poet. The name of her residence was, it appears, Netherplace.

XIV.

THE HIGHLAND WELCOME.

When Death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
A time that surely shall come;
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more
Than just a Highland welcome.

Tradition says that Burns, on recrossing the Highland border, turned round and bade farewell to the hospitalities of the north in these happy lines: another account states that he was called on for a toast at table, and gave "The Highland Welcome," much to the pleasure of all who heard him. Both accounts may be true.

XV.
ON WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SHREWD Willie Smellie to Crochallan came,
The old cock'd hat, the grey surtout, the same;
His bristling beard just rising in its might,
'Twas four long nights and days to shaving night;
His uncomb'd grizzly locks wild staring, thatch'd
A head for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd:
Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting, rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

William Smellie, a distinguished name, was author of the Philosophy of Natural History, a work which made him widely known. He was member of the Antiquarian and Royal Societies of Edinburgh; moreover, he belonged to a club of which Burns was a member, called the Crochallan Fencibles. He was a singular person, disregarded nicety of dress, loved wine and sociality, and sallies of humour:—

"Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting, rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good."

XVI.
VERSES
WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE INN AT CARRON.

WE came na here to view your warks
In hopes to be mair wise,
But only, lest we gang to hell,
It may be nae surprise:

But whan we tirl'd at your door,
Your porter dought na hear us;
Sae may, shou'd we to hell's yetts come,
Your billy Satan sair us!

The reason I have heard assigned for refusing to show the Carron Foundries to Burns was that he called on a Sunday. This could hardly be: he knew that the labour which rendered the place interesting had ceased; that the furnaces were mostly extinguished and the "warks" not to be seen. He perhaps sought admittance without an introduction. On his second visit he was received with a civility that soothed him: he made one remark—"The blazing furnaces and melting iron realized the description of the giants forging thunderbolts."

XVII.

THE BOOK-WORMS.



THROUGH and through the inspired leaves,
Ye maggots make your windings;
But, oh! respect his lordship's taste,
And spare his golden bindings.

The origin of these lines is singular. Burns, on a visit to a nobleman, was shown into the library, where stood a Shakspeare splendidly bound, but unread, and much worm-eaten. Long after the Poet's death, some one happened to open, accidentally perhaps, the same neglected book, and found the epigram in the handwriting of Burns.

XVIII.

LINES ON STIRLING.

Here Stuarts once in glory reigned,
And laws for Scotland's weal ordained;
But now unroofed their palace stands,
Their sceptre's swayed by other hands;
The injured Stuart line is gone,
A race outlandish fills their throne.

When Burns visited Stirling in 1787, and beheld the ruins of that princely place where Scottish parliaments once assembled, and princes dispensed justice, he was stung to the heart, and vented his indignation in these verses. The concluding couplet, forming the epigrammatic sting, is cut out. What was improper in the days of Burns is not proper now.

XIX.

THE REPROOF.

Rash mortal, and slanderous Poet, thy name
Shall no longer appear in the records of fame;
Dost not know that old Mansfield, who writes like
the Bible,
Says the more 'tis a truth, Sir, the more 'tis a libel?

The imprudence of the lines on Stirling was hinted to the Poet by a friend; on which he took out his diamond, saying, "O, I mean to reprove myself," walked to the window, and scratched "The Reproof" on the pane.

XX.

THE REPLY.

LIKE Esop's lion, Burns' says, sore I feel
All others scorn—but damn that ass's heel.

The minister of Gladsmuir wrote a rhyming censure of the Stirling lines, and intimated that the race of the Poet was run, and the shades of oblivion about to receive him. Burns took out a pencil, and added his "Reply" to the reverend bard's expostulation.

XXI.

LINES

WRITTEN UNDER THE PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED MISS BURNS.

CEASE, ye prudes, your envious railings,
Lovely Burns has charms—confess:
True it is, she had one failing—
Had a woman ever less?

The Miss Burns of these lines was well known to the bucks of Edinburgh in the days of the Poet's abode in the metropolis. There is a letter still extant, addressed by Burns, in behalf of his beauteous namesake, to the magistrates of Edinburgh, in which she is made ironically to claim their protection for a laxer system of social morality, and a freer intercourse betwixt youth and beauty.

XXII.

EXTEMPORE IN THE COURT OF SESSION.

-TE.

He clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
'Till in a declamation-mist,
His argument he tint it:
He gaped for't, he graped for't,
He fand it was awa, man;
But what his common sense came short,
He eked out wi' law, man.

MR. ER—NE.

Collected Harry stood awee,
Then open'd out his arm, man;
His lordship sat wi' ruefu' e'e,
And ey'd the gathering storm, man:
Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
Or torrents owre a linn, man;
The Bench sae wise lift up their eyes,
Half-wauken'd wi' the din, man.

These are two of the portraits which Burns drew of his Edinburgh acquaintances. That of the Lord Advocate is admirable for breadth and character: Harry Erskine is not so happy. He was a wit, a punster, and a poet; and one of the most companionable, intelligent, and eloquent men of his time.

XXIII.

THE HENPECK'D HUSBAND.

CURS'D be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife!
Who has no will but by her high permission;
Who has not sixpence but in her possession;
Who must to her his dear friend's secret tell;
Who dreads a curtain lecture worse than hell!
Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
I'd break her spirit, or I'd break her heart;
I'd charm her with the magic of a switch,
I'd kiss her maids, and kick the perverse b—h.

It is related that one day the lady of a house where the Poet dined expressed herself with less civility than he expected about the depth of her husband's potations and his habits of extravagance. Her freedom of tongue was rewarded by these sharp verses.

XXIV.

WRITTEN AT INVERARY.

WHOE'ER he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he come to wait upon
The lord their god, his Grace.

There's naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland cauld and hunger;
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in an anger.

During the first Highland tour of the Poet, he halted at Inverary; but on finding himself neglected by the innkeeper, whose house was filled with visiters to his Grace the Duke of Argyll, he expressed in these verses his sense of the incivility with which he was treated. Tradition speaks of a pursuit which took place on the part of "The Campbell," and of a determination not to be soothed on the part of the Poet.

XXV.

ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATIONS OF MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.

O THOU, whom poesy abhors,
Whom prose has turned out of doors,
Heard'st thou that groan? proceed no further;
'Twas laurelled Martial roaring murther!

Burns has himself related the origin of this sally:—

"Stopping at a merchant's shop, a friend of mine, in Edinburgh, one day put Elphinstone's Translation of Martial into my hand, and desired my opinion of it. I asked permission to write my opinion on a blank leaf of the book; which being granted, I wrote this epigram."

XXVI.

INSCRIPTION

ON THE HEADSTONE OF FERGUSSON.

Here lies
ROBERT FERGUSSON, Poet.
Born, September 5, 1751:
Died, Oct. 15, 1774.

No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
"No storied urn nor animated bust;"
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.

Some social friends of both bards have added monumental iron-work to the simple head-stone which Burns erected over Fergusson's grave. The taste cannot be commended—though done for the purpose of preserving, it is more likely to destroy, the precious memorial.

XXVII.

ON A SCHOOLMASTER.

HERE lie Willie Michie's banes;
O, Satan! when ye tak him,
Gi' him the schoolin' o' your weans,
For clever de'ils he'll make them.

Willie Michie was schoolmaster of Cleish parish, in Fifeshire, and became acquainted with Burns during his first visit to Edinburgh, in 1787 His name is not mentioned in all the correspondence of the Poet, nor is he numbered amongst his admirers or friends.

XXVIII.

A GRACE BEFORE DINNER.

O Thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless thee, God of Nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent :
And, if it please thee, Heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent ;
But, whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content!
Amen.

The distinction of this Grace has been given to several houses. 'It was a favourite practice to ask the Poet for a blessing, even where he was a guest. His readiness was generally known; and whatever he said was gratefully remembered.

XXIX.

ON WAT.

Sic a reptile was Wat,
Sic a miscreant slave,
That the very worms damned him
When laid in his grave.
"In his flesh there's a famine,"
A starv'd reptile cries;
"An' his heart is rank poison,"
Another replies.

The name of the person on whom this terrible epitaph was composed is not known. I heard the late Mr. Cromek recite it, and say that he had sought in vain to discover who the Walter was against whom it was directed. The name might be found; but, in gratifying idle curiosity, much pain would be inflicted.

XXX.

ON CAPTAIN FRANCIS GROSE.

The devil got notice that Grose was a-dying,
So whip! at the summons, old Satan came flying;
But when he approach'd where poor Francis lay moaning,
And saw each bed-post with its burden a-groaning,
Astonish'd! confounded! cry'd Satan, "By God!
I'll want 'im, ere I take such a damnable load!"

It is related that one evening, at table, when wine and wit were flowing, Grose, delighted with some of the sallies of Burns, requested the honour of a couplet upon himself. The Poet eyed the corpulent antiquarian for a minute's space or so, and then repeated this epigram amid roars of laughter.

XXXI.
THE KIRK OF LAMINGTON.

As cauld a wind as ever blew,
A caulder kirk, and in't but few;
As cauld a minister's e'er spak,
Ye'se a' be het ere I come back.

The Poet was stopped by a storm once in Clydesdale, and on Sunday went to Lamington Kirk: the day was so rough, the kirk so cold, and the sermon so little to his liking, that he left his poetic protest on the window.

XXXII.
THE LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

The Solemn League and Covenant
Cost Scotland blood—cost Scotland tears:
But it sealed freedom's sacred cause—
If thou'rt a slave, indulge thy sneers.

This was spoken in reply to a gentleman who sneered at the sufferings of Scotland for conscience sake, and called the Solemn League and Covenant of the Lords and People ridiculous and fanatical.

XXXIII.

WRITTEN ON A PANE OF GLASS,

IN THE INN AT MOFFATT.

ASK why God made the gem so small,
And why so huge the granite?
Because God meant mankind should set
The higher value on it.

One day, while Burns was at Moffat, "The charming lovely Davies" of one of his songs rode past, accompanied by a lady tall and portly: on a friend asking the Poet why God made one lady so large, and Miss Davies so little, he replied in the words of the epigram. No one has apologized so handsomely for "scrimpit stature."

XXXIV.

SPOKEN,

ON BEING APPOINTED TO THE EXCISE.

SEARCHING auld wives barrels,
Och—hon! the day!
That clarty barm should stain my laurels;
But—what'll ye say!
These movin' things ca'd wives and weans
Wad move the very hearts o' stanes!

That the Poet delighted not in the name of gauger is well known: yet he would allow no one to speak ill of the Excise but himself. He was strict, but merciful: the smuggler had no chance of escape from him, while to the country purchaser he was very indulgent.

XXXV.

LINES ON MRS. KEMBLE.

KEMBLE, thou cur'st my unbelief
  Of Moses and his rod;
At Yarico's sweet notes of grief
  The rock with tears had flow'd.

When Mrs. Kemble performed, in 1794, the part of Yarico at the Dumfries theatre, Burns was in Mrs. Riddel's box, and was deeply moved by her natural and pathetic acting. He took out a bit of paper, wrote these lines with a pencil, and had them handed to her at the conclusion of the piece.

XXXVI.

TO MR. SYME.

No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
  And cook'ry the first in the nation;
Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit,
  Is proof to all other temptation.

John Syme, of Ryedale, was the constant companion of Burns, and these lines were spoken to him in answer to an invitation to dine, in which he promised the "first of company, and the first of cookery." He was a gentleman of education and talent, difficult to please in the pleasures of the table; a wit in his way, an epigrammatist and rhymer, an admirable teller of a story, and altogether a convivial and well-informed man.

XXXVII.

TO MR. SYME.

WITH A PRESENT OF A DOZEN OF PORTER.

O, HAD the malt thy strength of mind,
Or hops the flavour of thy wit,
'Twere drink for first of humankind,
A gift that e'en for Syme were fit.

Jerusalem Tavern, Dumfries.

It cannot be denied that Burns had a happy knack at paying compliments; nor can it soon be forgotten that Syme abounded in humour, and in dry sarcastic sallies such as the Poet loved. In the deeper sensibilities of heart he was more deficient. It is to him that Ramsay of Ochtertyre alludes, when he says the pathos of Burns' conversation brought tears even to the cheeks of Mr. S., "albeit unused to the melting mood."

XXXVIII.

INSCRIPTION ON A GOBLET.

THERE's death in the cup—sae beware!
Nay, more—there is danger in touching;
But wha can avoid the fell snare?
The man and his wine's sae bewitching!

One day after dinner, at Ryedale, Burns wrote these lines on a goblet with his diamond. Syme would seem to have been less affected with the compliment than with defacing his crystal service, for he threw the goblet behind the fire. We are not told what the Poet thought; but it is said that Brown, the clerk of "Stamp-office Johnny," snatched the goblet out of the fire uninjured and kept it as a relique till his death.

XXXIX.
THE INVITATION.

The King's most humble servant I,
Can scarcely spare a minute;
But I'll be wi' you by and bye,
Or else the devil's in it.

It was in verses such as these that the Poet answered invitations and replied to civilities: he was rarely at a loss, and had a happy knack in escaping from difficulties whenever he attempted to escape in rhyme.

XL.
THE CREED OF POVERTY.

In politics if thou would'st mix,
And mean thy fortunes be;
Bear this in mind—be deaf and blind;
Let great folks hear and see

When the Board of Excise informed Burns that his business was to act, and not to think and speak, he read the order to a friend, turned the paper, and wrote what he called "The Creed of Poverty."

XLI.

WRITTEN IN A LADY'S POCKET-BOOK.

Grant me, indulgent Heav'n, that I may live
To see the miscreants feel the pains they give,
Deal freedom's sacred treasures free as air,
Till slave and despot be but things which were.

That Burns sympathized with the lovers of liberty in the first outburst of the French Revolution, these verses, as well as others, sufficiently testify. That freedom was darkening down into despotism in France, he lived partly to see; nor was his muse silent in support of order and independence in his native land.

XLII.

THE PARSON'S LOOKS.

That there is falsehood in his looks
 I must and will deny;
They say their master is a knave—
 And sure they do not lie.

Some one said to Burns that he saw falsehood in a certain Rev. Doctor B.'s very looks: the Poet considered for a moment, and gave his answer in this epigram.

XLIII.

THE TOAD-EATER.

What of earls with whom you have supt,
And of dukes that you dined with yestreen?
Lord! a louse, Sir, is still but a louse,
Though it crawl on the curls of a queen.

At the table of Maxwell of Terraughty, when it was the pleasure of one of the guests to talk only of dukes with whom he had drank, and of earls with whom he had dined, Burns silenced him with this epigram.

XLIV.

ON ROBERT RIDDEL.

To Riddel, much-lamented man,
This ivied cot was dear;
Reader, dost value matchless worth?
This ivied cot revere.

The first time that Burns rode up Nithside, after the death of his friend of Friars-Carse, he gave a boy his horse to hold, went into the Hermitage in the wood, threw himself on a seat, and remained for a full half hour. I copied these lines from the window where they were traced by the diamond of Burns.

XLV.

THE TOAST.

INSTEAD of a song, boys, I'll give you a toast—
Here's the memory of those on the twelfth that
we lost!—
That we lost, did I say? nay, by Heav'n, that we
found;
For their fame it shall last while the world goes
round.
The next in succession, I'll give you—the King!
Whoe'er would betray him, on high may he swing;
And here's the grand fabric, our free Constitution,
As built on the base of the great Revolution;
And longer with politics not to be cramm'd,
Be Anarchy curs'd, and be Tyranny damn'd;
And who would to Liberty e'er prove disloyal,
May his son be a hangman, and he his first trial.

Burns was called upon for a song at a dinner of the Dumfries Volunteers, in honour of Rodney's victory of the 12th of April, 1782, he replied to the call by saying
"Instead of a song, boys, I'll give you a toast."

XLVI.

ON A PERSON NICKNAMED THE MARQUIS.

HERE lies a mock Marquis whose titles were shamm'd;
If ever he rise, it will be to be damn'd.

This personage was landlord of a respectable public-house in Dumfries, which Burns frequented; in a place where to-names abound, he obtained that of the Marquis; and the little court or alley where his change-house stood, is still called "The Marquis's Close." In a moment when vanity prevailed against prudence, he desired Burns to write his epitaph. He did it at once—little to the pleasure of the landlord.

XLVII.
LINES WRITTEN ON A WINDOW.

YE men of wit and wealth, why all this sneering,
'Gainst poor Excisemen? give the cause a hearing;
What are your landlords' rent-rolls? teazing ledgers:
What premiers—what? even monarchs' mighty gaugers:
Nay, what are priests, those seeming godly wise men?
What are they, pray, but spiritual Excisemen?

The origin of these lines is curious and accidental. One day, while in the King's Arms Tavern, Dumfries, Burns overheard a country gentleman talking wittily rather than wisely concerning excisemen; the Poet went to a window, and on one of the panes wrote the "Rebuke" with his diamond. It was taken in good part, as indeed it could not well be otherwise, and remained long on the window an attraction to travellers.

XLVIII.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE GLOBE TAVERN, DUMFRIES.

The graybeard, old Wisdom, may boast of his treasures,
Give me with gay Folly to live;
I grant him calm blooded, time-settled pleasures,
But Folly has raptures to give.

The Poet ever looked widely abroad: he took no narrow-souled views of any thing: he saw that even in the company of Folly a wise man might sit down and be edified. "Out of the nettle Danger he could pluck the flower Safety." There was no hypocrisy or cant in his composition.

XLIX.

THE SELKIRK GRACE.

Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it.
But we hae meat and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thanket.

On a visit to St. Mary's Isle, the Earl of Selkirk requested Burns to say grace at dinner. These were the words he uttered—they were applauded then, and have since been known in Galloway by the name of "The Selkirk Grace."

L.

ON THE POET'S DAUGHTER.

Here lies a rose, a budding rose,
  Blasted before its bloom;
Whose innocence did sweets disclose
  Beyond that flower's perfume.

To those who for her loss are griev'd,
  This consolation's given—
She's from a world of woe reliev'd,
  And blooms a rose in heaven.

These tender and affecting lines were written, it is said, on the death of the Poet's daughter, in 1795. He loved the child dearly, and mourned her loss with many tears. His own health was giving way—he was fading before his time.

LI.

EPITAPH.

Here brewer Gabriel's fire's extinct,
  And empty all his barrels:
He's blest—if as he brew'd he drink—
  In upright honest morals.

Gabriel Richardson, a worthy man and a good brewer, lived in Dumfries, and at his hospitable table Burns spent many pleasant hours. His son, Dr. Richardson, the distinguished traveller, said the last mark of civilization which he found on his expedition to the north, was poetry—and that by Burns. These lines were written on a goblet, still preserved in the family.

LII.

ON THE DEATH OF A LAP-DOG,

NAMED ECHO.

In wood and wild, ye warbling throng,
Your heavy loss deplore;
Now half extinct your powers of song,
Sweet Echo is no more.

Ye jarring screeching things around,
Scream your discordant joys;
Now half your din of tuneless sound
With Echo silent lies.

Burns wrote these lines at Kenmore Castle, an ancient seat of the Gordons. It happened that Mrs. Gordon's lap-dog died on the day of the Poet's arrival. She requested an epitaph for him. "This," says Syme, "was setting Hercules to his distaff: he disliked the subject, but to please the lady he would try."

LIII.

ON SEEING THE BEAUTIFUL SEAT OF LORD GALLOWAY.

WHAT dost thou in that mansion fair?—
Flit, Galloway, and find
Some narrow, dirty, dungeon cave,
The picture of thy mind!

LIV.

ON THE SAME.

No Stewart art thou, Galloway,
The Stewarts all were brave;
Besides, the Stewarts were but fools,
Not one of them a knave.



LV.

ON THE SAME.

BRIGHT ran thy line, O Galloway,
Thro' many a far-fam'd sire!
So ran the far-fam'd Roman way,
So ended in a mire.

LVI.

TO THE SAME,

ON THE AUTHOR BEING THREATENED WITH HIS RESENTMENT.

SPARE me thy vengeance, Galloway,
In quiet let me live :
I ask no kindness at thy hand,
For thou hast none to give.

These sharp squibs were launched against the house of Galloway, during the Heron contest. Though "The Stewart" at first felt offended, he smiled, it is said, when he considered how wayward the muse is, and how hot even the calmest blood grows during an election.

LVII.

ON A COUNTRY LAIRD.

BLESS Jesus Christ, O Cardoness,
With grateful lifted eyes,
Who said that not the soul alone,
But body too, must rise :
For had he said, "the soul alone
From death I will deliver;"
Alas! alas! O Cardoness,
Then thou hadst slept for ever.

The hero of these merciless verses was, it is said, a very worthy person, Sir David Maxwell of Cardoness, who had offended the Poet in the heat of the Heron election. What the offence was has not been stated; but contradiction is enough in election matters, when the wisest men justify the sarcasm of the Frenchman, that the British go stark mad every seven years.

LVIII.

ON JOHN BUSHBY.

Here lies John Bushby, honest man!—
Cheat him Devil, gin ye can.

This person has already been mentioned. He was a good lawyer, keen, acute, fertile in expedients, and full of resources in all pressing emergencies. The peasantry, who hate all stirring attornies, regarded him with much malevolence; and as he crossed the Poet in the thorny path of politics, it was reckoned a service rendered the cause of virtue when Burns lampooned him. It is said that as he lay on his death-bed, knock followed knock at his door, and creditor succeeded creditor so fast, demanding money, that the sinking man turned his face sullenly away, and muttered, "They winna let me die, by G-d!"

LIX.

THE TRUE LOYAL NATIVES.

Ye true "Loyal Natives" attend to my song,
In uproar and riot rejoice the night long;
From envy or hatred your corps is exempt,
But where is your shield from the darts of contempt?

The origin of these lines is related by Cromek. When politics ran high, the Poet happened to be in a tavern, and the following lines—the production of one of "The True Loyal Natives" were handed over the table to Burns :—

> "Ye sons of sedition give ear to my song,
> Let Syme, Burns, and Maxwell pervade every throng;
> With Craken th' attorny, and Mundell the quack,
> Send Willie the mo. ger to hell with a smack."

The Poet took out a pencil, and instantly wrote his reply to "The True Loyal Natives."

LX.

ON A SUICIDE.

EARTH'D up here lies an imp o'hell,
  Planted by Satan's dibble—
Poor silly wretch, he's damn'd himsel'
  To save the Lord the trouble.

A melancholy person of the name of Glendinning having taken away his own life, was interred at a place called "The Old Chapel," close beside Dumfries. My friend, Dr. Copland Hutchison, happened to be walking out that way: he saw Burns with his foot on the grave, his hat on his knee, and paper laid on his hat, on which he was writing. He then took the paper, thrust it with his finger into the red mould of the grave, and went away. This was the above epigram, and such was the Poet's mode of publishing it.

LXI.

LINES TO JOHN RANKINE.

HE who of Rankine sang lies stiff and dead,
And a green grassy hillock haps his head;
Alas! alas! a devilish change indeed.

These lines, it is said, were written to Rankine and forwarded to Adamhill immediately after the Poet's death. Inquiries into the accuracy of this account have been made in vain. The statement was made in a thin octavo volume, published at Glasgow in 1801, which contained the "Jolly Beggars" and other posthumous poems.

LXII.

JESSY LEWARS.

TALK not to me of savages
From Afric's burning sun,
No savage e'er could rend my heart
As, Jessy, thou hast done.
But Jessy's lovely hand in mine,
A mutual faith to plight,
Not even to view the heavenly choir
Would be so blest a sight.

During the last illness of the Poet, Mr. Brown, the surgeon who attended him, came in, and stated that he had been looking at a collection of wild beasts just arrived, and pulling out the list of the animals, held it out to Jessy Lewars. The Poet snatched it from him, took up a pen, and with red ink wrote these verses or the back of the advertizement, saying, "Now it is fit to be presented to a lady." This precious relique is still in her possession.

LXIII.

THE TOAST.

FILL me with the rosy wine,
Call a toast—a toast divine;
Give the Poet's darling flame,
Lovely Jessy be the name;
Then thou mayest freely boast,
Thou hast given a peerless toast.

One day while the Poet was much indisposed, he observed Jessy Lewars moving, with a light foot, about the house, lest she should disturb him. He took up a crystal goblet containing wine and water for moistening his lips, wrote "The Toast" upon it with a diamond, and presented it to her.—"She was," says Gilbert Burns, "a deservedly great favourite of the Poet's, and a soothing friend to Mrs. Burns at the time of his death."

LXIV.

ON MISS JESSY LEWARS.

SAY, sages, what's the charm on earth
Can turn Death's dart aside?
It is not purity and worth,
Else Jessy had not died.

R. B.

The constancy of her attendance and the anxiety of her mind, made Jessy Lewars suffer a slight indisposition —"You must not die yet," said the Poet with a smile; "however, I shall provide for the worst. Give me that goblet, and I'll write your epitaph." He wrote these four lines with his diamond, and, presenting the goblet, said, 'That will be a companion to 'The Toast.'"

LXV.

THE RECOVERY OF JESSY LEWARS.

BUT rarely seen since Nature's birth,
The natives of the sky;
Yet still one seraph's left on earth,
For Jessy did not die.

R. B.

A little repose brought health back to the young lady. On this Burns said, smiling, "I knew you would get better; you have much to do before you die, believe me. Besides, there is a poetic reason for your recovery." So saying, he took up a pen and wrote the above.

SONGS

AND

BALLADS.

The Songs and Ballads of Burns are now gathered together for the first time. They have been much scattered: some continued in manuscript; others, printed with his initials, escaped the notice of the public; while a number, published anonymously, became popular without being known as his compositions. The Poet inserted very few of his lyrics in his works: it is believed that he contemplated their publication separately: he wrote carefully and corrected anxiously many fine songs for the national work of Thomson, and he supplied Johnson's Musical Museum with a fourth and more of the songs which compose the six volumes of that equally curious and valuable work. The commu-

nications to the latter consist of old songs, with amended and additional verses—of choruses and other snatches of the olden minstrelsy, eked out and completed in their own peculiar spirit—and of original songs, wholly from his own hand, and mostly published with his name annexed. Some of these amended strains are of great beauty, and many of the original songs are unequalled for pathos and spirit. The editor has observed something like chronological order of composition in the arrangement, and added notes explanatory or illustrative, in which scraps of ancient or contemporary song have been introduced, as often as they afforded light to the accompanying strains of the Poet.

HANDSOME NELL.

Tune.—"*I am a man unmarried.*"

O once I lov'd a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that honour warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

As bonnie lasses I hae seen,
And mony full as braw;
But for a modest gracefu' mien
The like I never saw.

A bonnie lass I will confess
Is pleasant to the e'e,
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.

But Nelly's looks are blithe and sweet,
And what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.

She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
  Both decent and genteel:
And then there's something in her gait
  Gars ony dress look weel.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
  May slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and modesty
  That polishes the dart.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me;
  'Tis this enchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
  She reigns without control.

Of this song the Poet's own account is the best that can be given :—" For my own part, I never had the least inclination of turning poet till I once got heartily in love, and then rhyme and song were in a manner the spontaneous language of my heart. This composition was the first of my performances, and done at an early period of life, when my heart glowed with honest warm simplicity; unacquainted and uncorrupted with the ways of a wicked world. The performance is, indeed, very puerile and silly, but I am always pleased with it, as it recals to my mind those happy days when my heart was yet honest, and my tongue was sincere. The subject of it was a young girl who really deserved all the praises I have bestowed on her. I not only had this opinion of her then, but I actually think so still, now that the spell is long since broken, and the enchantment at end."

LUCKLESS FORTUNE.

O Raging fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low, O!
O raging fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low, O!
My stem was fair, my bud was green
My blossom sweet did blow, O;
The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,
And made my branches grow, O.
But luckless fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low, O;
But luckless fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low, O.

Burns tells us that he attempted to compose an air in the true Scottish style; but was not master of the science of music enough to enable him to prick down the notes, though they remained long on his memory. The tune consisted, he said, of three parts, and these words were the offspring of the same period, and echoed the air.—"My poor country muse," he says, in the memoranda where this song is inserted, "all rustic, awkward, and unpolished as she is, has more charms for me than any other of the pleasures of life beside—as I hope she will not desert me in misfortune. I may even then learn to be, if not happy, at least easy, and *south a sang* to soothe my misery."—(March, 1784.)

I DREAM'D I LAY.

I.

I DREAM'D I lay where flowers were springing
  Gaily in the sunny beam ;
List'ning to the wild birds singing,
  By a falling, crystal stream :
Straight the sky grew black and daring ;
  Thro' the woods the whirlwinds rave ;
Trees with aged arms were warring,
  O'er the swelling drumlie wave.

II.

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
  Such the pleasure I enjoy'd ;
But lang or noon, loud tempests storming,
  A' my flowery bliss destroy'd.
Tho' fickle fortune has deceiv'd me,
  She promis'd fair, and perform'd but ill ;
Of mony a joy and hope bereav'd me,
  I bear a heart shall support me still.

The Poet was some seventeen years old when he wrote this melancholy song. The early days of Burns were typical of the latter. To-day, lively—to-morrow, desponding : depressed in the morning by labour, he brightened up as the sun went down, and was ready for " a cannie hour " with the lass of his love—for a song vehemently joyous with his comrades—or a mason-meeting, where care was discharged, and merriment abounded.

TIBBIE, I HAE SEEN THE DAY.

Tune.—" *Invercald's Reel.*"

CHORUS.

O Tibbie, I hae seen the day,
Ye wad na been sae shy ;
For lack o' gear ye lightly me,
But, trowth, I care na by.

Yestreen I met you on the moor,
Ye spak na, but gaed by like stoure ;
Ye geck at me because I'm poor,
But fient a hair care I.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
Because ye hae the name o' clink,
That ye can please me at a wink,
Whene'er ye like to try.

But sorrow tak him that's sae mean,
Altho' his pouch o' coin were clean,
Wha follows ony saucy quean,
That looks sae proud and high.

Altho' a lad were e'er sae smart,
If that he want the yellow dirt,
Ye'll cast your head anither airt,
And answer him fu' dry.

But if he hae the name o' gear,
Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
Tho' hardly he, for sense or lear,
Be better than the kye.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak my advice,
Your daddie's gear maks you sae nice;
The deil a ane wad spier your price,
Were ye as poor as I.

There lives a lass in yonder park,
I would nae gie her in her sark,
For thee, wi' a' thy thousan' mark;
Ye need na look sae high.

This is one of the earliest of the Poet's compositions. The Tibbie wha "spak na, but gaed by like stoure," was the daughter, it is said, of a portioner of Kyle—a man with three acres of peat moss — an inheritance which she thought entitled her to treat a landless wooer with disdain. The Bard was very young when this 'venture happened, and perhaps she neither looked for et song nor such converse as maidens love from one ıch tender years.

MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

Tune.—" *The Weaver and his Shuttle, O.*"

I.

My father was a farmer
  Upon the Carrick border, O,
And carefully he bred me
  In decency and order, O;
He bade me act a manly part,
  Though I had ne'er a farthing, O;
For without an honest manly heart,
  No man was worth regarding, O.

II.

Then out into the world
  My course I did determine, O;
Tho' to be rich was not my wish,
  Yet to be great was charming, O;
My talents they were not the worst,
  Nor yet my education, O;
Resolv'd was I, at least to try,
  To mend my situation, O.

III.

In many a way, and vain essay,
I courted fortune's favour, O;
Some cause unseen still stept between,
To frustrate each endeavour, O:
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpower'd;
Sometimes by friends forsaken, O;
And when my hope was at the top,
I still was worst mistaken, O.

IV.

Then sore harass'd, and tir'd at last,
With fortune's vain delusion, O,
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams,
And came to this conclusion, O:
The past was bad, and the future hid;
Its good or ill untried, O;
But the present hour was in my pow'r,
And so I would enjoy it, O.

V.

No help, nor hope, nor view had I,
Nor person to befriend me, O;
So I must toil, and sweat and broil,
And labour to sustain me, O:
To plough and sow, to reap and mow,
My father bred me early, O;
For one, he said, to labour bred,
Was a match for fortune fairly, O.

VI.

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor,
Thro' life I'm doom'd to wander O,
Till down my weary bones I lay,
In everlasting slumber, O.
No view nor care, but shun whate'er
Might breed me pain or sorrow, O:
I live to-day as well's I may,
Regardless of to-morrow, O.

VII.

But cheerful still, I am as well,
As a monarch in a palace, O,
Tho' fortune's frown still hunts me down,
With all her wonted malice, O:
I make indeed my daily bread,
But ne'er can make it farther, O;
But, as daily bread is all I need,
I do not much regard her, O.

VIII.

When sometimes by my labour
I earn a little money, O,
Some unforeseen misfortune
Comes gen'rally upon me, O
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect,
Or my goodnatur'd folly, O;
But come what will, I've sworn it still,
I'll ne'er be melancholy, O.

IX.

All you who follow wealth and power
With unremitting ardour, O,
The more in this you look for bliss,
You leave your view the farther, O :
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts,
Or nations to adore you, O,
A cheerful honest-hearted clown
I will prefer before you, O.

Little poetic fervour found its way into this chaunt; yet it abounds with manly sentiments, and exhibits fortitude of mind amid the sorrows of the disastrous year 1784.—" The following song," says the Poet, " is a wild rhapsody, miserably deficient in versification; but as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over." He feels what many have felt—

" When sometimes by my labour
I earn a little money, O,
Some unforeseen misfortune
Comes gen'rally upon me, O."

Amid all his distresses and woes—

" Ill har'sts, daft bargains, cutty stools,"

he had still some consolation—

" To plough and sow, and reap and mow,
My father bred me early, O;
For one, he said, to labour bred,
Was a match for fortune fairly, O."

Much of the early history of the Poet may be traced in these rude verses.

JOHN BARLEYCORN:

A BALLAD.

There were three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high;
An' they ha'e sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head;
And they ha'e sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful spring came kindly on,
And show'rs began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

The sultry suns of summer came,
And he grew thick and strong;
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To shew their deadly rage.

They've ta'en a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They filled up a darksome pit
With water to the brim;
They heaved in John Barleycorn,
There let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
hey toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

And they ha'e ta'en his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho' the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

It is intimated by Burns that John Barleycorn is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name; the ancient ballad is printed by Jamieson, who

gives it, he says, from his own recollection as he learned it in Morayshire, when he was a boy, and before the poems of Burns appeared. The merit of originality belongs to the old bard. Some of the verses are word for word the same; and those which are altered, have suffered little change in the sentiment. A few specimens will suffice to shew this:—

"There came three merry men from the east,
And three merry men they be;
And they have sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn shall die."

The effect of spring on honest John is well described; the summer heat, too, does its duty:—

"But the spring time it came on at last,
And showers began to fall;
John Barleycorn sprung up again,
Which did surprise them all.

"Then the summer heat on him did beat,
And he grew pale and wan;
John Barleycorn has got a beard
Like any other man."

To John's merits when he is cut by the sickle, thrashed, winnowed, ground, and brewed, the old bard bears explicit testimony:—

"He'll gar the huntsman shoot his dog,
His gold a miser scorn;
He'll gar a maiden dance stark naked,
Wi' the tooming of a horn."

The version of Burns is more consistent, but not more graphic than the old strain.

THE RIGS O' BARLEY.

Tune—"*Corn Rigs are bonnie.*"

I.

It was upon a Lammas night,
  When corn rigs are bonnie,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light,
  I held awa to Annie:
The time flew by wi' tentless heed,
  'Till 'tween the late and early,
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed,
  To see me thro' the barley.

II.

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
  The moon was shining clearly;
I set her down wi' right good will,
  Amang the rigs o' barley:
I ken't her heart was a' my ain;
  I lov'd her most sincerely;
I kiss'd her owre and owre again,
  Amang the rigs o' barley.

III.

I lock'd her in my fond embrace!
   Her heart was beating rarely :
My blessings on that happy place,
   Amang the rigs o' barley !
But by the moon and stars so bright,
   That shone that hour so clearly !
She ay shall bless that happy night,
   Amang the rigs o' barley.

IV.

I hae been blithe wi' comrades dear ;
   I hae been merry drinkin' ;
I hae been joyfu' gath'rin' gear ;
   I hae been happy thinkin' :
But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
   Tho' three times doubl'd fairly,
That happy night was worth them a',
   Amang the rigs o' barley.

CHORUS.

Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
   An' corn rigs are bonnie :
I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
   Amang the rigs wi' Annie.

It is generally believed in the west o. Scotland that Annie Ronald, afterwards Mrs. Paterson of Aikenbrae, was the inspirer of this charming song. The freedom and warmth of the words probably induced her to disown it in her latter days. The Poet was a frequent visiter at her father's house while he continued in Mossgiel, and Mr. Ronald liked so much the conversation of his eloquent neighbour, that he sat late with him on many occasions. This seems to have displeased another of his daughters, who said she "could na see ought about Robert Burns that would tempt her to sit up wi' him till twal o'clock at night." It is not known how far Annie Ronald joined in her sister's dislike of the Bard. She probably thought on these matters like a young girl on Nithside, who said, with much simplicity, "I wonder what my brother John sees in the lasses, that he likes them sae weel;—for my part, I wad na gie the company o' ae lad for twenty lasses."

MONTGOMERY'S PEGGY.

Tune.—" *Galla-Water.*"

Altho' my bed were in yon muir
  Amang the heather, in my plaidie,
Yet happy, happy would I be,
  Had I my dear Montgomery's Peggy.

When o'er the hill beat surly storms,
  And winter nights were dark and rainy;
I'd seek some dell, and in my arms
  I'd shelter dear Montgomery's Peggy.

Were I a baron proud and high,
  And horse and servants waiting ready,
Then a' 'twad gie o' joy to me,
  The sharin't with Montgomery's Peggy.

" This fragment is done," says Burns, " in imitation of the manner of a noble old Scottish piece, called M'Millan's Peggy. My Montgomery's Peggy was my deity for six or eight months. She had been bred in a style of life rather elegant; but, as Vanbrugh says, 'My damned star found me out there, too:' for though I began the affair merely in a *gaieté de cœur,* or to tell the truth, which will scarcely be believed, a vanity of

shewing my parts in courtship, particularly my abilities at a *billet doux*, on which I always piqued myself, made me lay siege to her; and when, as I always do in my foolish gallantries, I had battered myself into a very warm affection for her, she told, in a flag of truce, that her fortress had been for some time before the rightful property of another. It cost me some heart-aches to get rid of the affair. I have even tried to imitate, in this extempore thing, that irregularity in the rhyme which, when judiciously done, has such a fine effect on the ear."

Of M'Millan's Peggy various verses are yet remembered :—

"O I wad gie my gude brade sword,
And sae wad I my tartan plaidie,
Gin I were twenty miles o'er the Forth,
And along wi' me my bonnie Peggie.

"He's mounted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself upon a good grey naigie;
And he rode over hills, and he rode through howes,
And he rode quite away wi' the bonnie Peggie.

"Until that he came to a lone, lone glen,
Enough to frighten the bauldest bodie;
This glen's thy room, and thy lamp yon moon—
Light down, light down, my bonnie Peggie.

"He's made her bed o' the brekans green,
And her covering o' his tartan plaidie;
And the simmer moon looked smiling down,
To see him watch his sleeping lady."

Other verses might be added, and some curious variations given—more curious than decorous.

THE MAUCHLINE LADY.

Tune.—" *I had a Horse and I had nae Mair.*"

WHEN first I came to Stewart Kyle,
My mind it was nae steady;
Where'er I gaed, where'er I rade,
A mistress still I had ay:

But when I came roun' by Mauchline town,
Not dreadin' any body,
My heart was caught before I thought,
And by a Mauchline lady.

The Mauchline lady who caught the Poet's heart was Jean Armour. The way in which they became acquainted is thus related:—Jean had laid some linen webs down to bleach, and was sprinkling them among the gowans with water, when Luath, the Poet's dog, ran across them with his dirty feet and fawned upon her. She was ill pleased, and—

"E'en as he fawned, she strak the poor dumb tyke."

Burns reproached her in the words of Ramsay; she smiled, and so a friendship commenced, which was doomed to an early termination, and to give much of joy and woe.

THE HIGHLAND LASSIE.

Tune.—"*The Deuks dang o'er my Daddy!*"

Nae gentle dames, tho' e'er sae fair,
Shall ever be my muse's care:
Their titles a' are empty show;
Gie me my highland lassie, O.
    Within the glen sae bushy, O,
    Aboon the plains sae rushy, O,
    I set me down wi' right good will,
    To sing my highland lassie, O.

Oh, were yon hills and vallies mine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine!
The world then the love should know
I bear my highland lassie, O.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,
And I maun cross the raging sea;
But while my crimson currents flow,
I'll love my highland lassie, O.

Altho' thro' foreign climes I range,
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honour's glow,
My faithful highland lassie, O.

For her I'll dare the billows' roar,
For her I'll trace a distant shore,
That Indian wealth may lustre throw
Around my highland lassie, O.

She has my heart, she has my hand,
By sacred truth and honour's band!
'Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low,
I'm thine, my highland lassie, O.
Farewell the glen sae bushy, O!
Farewell the plain sae rushy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my highland lassie, O.

The Highland Lassie of this song, was the Mary Campbell of whose too early death the Poet sung afterwards with such eloquent pathos.—"My Highland Lassie," observes Burns, "was a warm-hearted, charming young creature, as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met by appointment on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the banks of the Ayr, where we spent the day in taking a farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projected change of life. At the close of autumn she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever which hurried my dear girl to the grave, before I could even hear of her illness."

END OF VOL. III.

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

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"This bids fair to be a very good edition of the collected works

'Of him who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough along the mountain side—'

of the Ayrshire peasant, Burns, who was indisputably one of the brightest poetical geniuses of modern times. The publishers have sensibly adopted the now prevailing plan of a monthly issue a plan which will never fail when properly applied to works of sterling merit."—*Printing Machine.*

"The high opinion which we expressed of Allan Cunningham's Life of the Bard

'Who rivalled all but Shakspeare here below

on a second and more careful perusal of the volume, we find no reason to diminish; in fact, the longer we become acquainted with the work, we find the novelty increase, for some new point in the Poet's life, some pithy anecdote, or some remark of the author's, equally true and judicious, attracts our attention. Our wishes and our wants we have found supplied in every page of Mr. Cunningham's Life of Burns. We feel it right to the publishers to say, that the volume is beautifully and tastefully got up, the portrait is manly and poetic, and the vignette a gem of landscape art."—*Naval and Military Gazette.*

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Wonder not, reader, that we paused when we cut the leaves of Allan Cunningham's Life of Burns, and feared we should not be satisfied. But we have read it, and we are satisfied."—*Court Journal.*

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"With regard to the literary merits of the volume, we need scarcely say, seeing it is the production of Allan Cunningham, that they are of a high order. Burns has not been more happy as a writer than he has been fortunate in his biographers—the names of Currie, Lockhart, and Cunningham are such as may not soon be found again. Allan Cunningham is the most talented and popular writer of the present day, one who leaves all the self-taught men far, very far behind him; nor need he shrink from a comparison with the most learned of the age. His diligence has never been surpassed, and very seldom equalled. Scotland has much reason to be proud of such a son. We recommend all who admire the genius of Burns, and revere his memory, to possess themselves without delay of this work."—*Scotsman.*

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